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Church and Politics

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MR. DEAN, Right Reverend and Reverend Sirs, ladies and gentlemen, I feel very humble in this presence, knowing that I ought to be among the listeners rather than standing here as speaker. And you of the graduating class, who are about to set forth upon your delicate mission as priests of the Church, and to whom in particular I am engaged to speak—if I were an orator trained to elicit the good will of an audience, I should be congratulating you on your successes in the school and flattering you with suave prophecies of the noble work you are prepared to accomplish. Above all my address should abound in glorifications of the venerable institution which you serve, lauding it as a guardian of the pure faith and as the guide of a world distraught by religious doubts. But I am not at all an orator; only a plain man, one troubled by much that I see going on about me, and ill at ease at what seems to be the direction the Church is taking to meet the turmoil of the age. And so I am venturing to assume the rôle of critic, though fully aware of the absence of any claim to such a title, and fearful that, under the necessity of being brief, my words may imply a dogmatic assurance which I am far from feeling.

A couple of Sundays ago I heard a sermon preached by the agent of the General Council of the Church in the field of social relations, and as such possessing a certain note of authority. It was an eloquent address, and manifestly was well received by the congregation. More than that, its doctrine seemed to me to fall in with what I am hearing from other pulpits and with what I am continually reading in books and magazines of an ecclesiastical stamp. It recalled to my mind the conversation of young priests I have known, filled with the zeal of their orders to remake the world. It brought up before me the grandiose gesture of the Archbishop of York, than whom no one stands higher in the Church, when recently through the pulpits of his diocese he raised a thousand voices to instruct, if not to intimidate, the British Government in its disposal of the income from taxation. It seemed to me as I listened that I was hearing the authentic voice of the Church, at least of that faction of the Anglican Church in America which today is most keenly alive to its sacred duties. I was carried along with the rest of the congregation; yet all the while another small voice within me was asking whether we were not dreaming of a fools' paradise in place of the Kingdom of God.

Religion, I heard, and hear, has two functions, (1) the salvation of the individual soul and (2) the redemption of society. To that doctrine no one I suppose would object. Nor would any one take exception to an argument designed to show in what wise the Christian character of the individual should manifest itself so as to contribute to the Christianizing of society. Of the need for social reorganization in these days of unrest and fear and cruel unemployment there can be no doubt. It is the means chosen for the achievement of this reformation and the nature of the reformation to be achieved that worry me in so much that I hear, and leave me often wondering whether I am listening to a sermon or to a political harangue. For the goal set in view it is fair to say that, so far as I know, only a small minority of the priesthood would be ready to identify the activity and influence of the Church openly with any one form of government, whether it be a transformed feudalism or capitalism or fascism or out and out Marxism. Nevertheless the burden of the arguments I hear is political to this extent that their trend is towards what might be called a sort of sentimental socialism. I may be misrepresenting the special sermon to which I have referred, but I am not wrong, I believe, in holding that a vague ideal of equalitarian brotherhood, to be introduced by an equally vague humanitarian sympathy, has been very widely accepted by the Church as a modern equivalent for what Christ meant by the Kingdom of God and repentance.

Now in so far as such an ideal is only a disguise for a specific ordering of society, it is a pure illusion. If there ever was a party of practical socialists who held that an equalitarian state could be established and maintained on the sentimental love of man for man, it certainly does not exist now; it was a dream very quickly extinguished by the stern lessons of history. Will you find warrant for such a faith in the economic fatalism of Karl Marx? Will you discover it in the theory of the Soviet rulers of Russia, who to the determinism of Marx have added the conscious will to power of the proletariat? If the Church thinks she can join the tide that seems for the moment to be sweeping the world towards communism, and at the same time believes an injection of soft sentiment can so control that movement as to overcome its naked materialistic and anti-religious tenets, then indeed the Church is indulging in hopes of a fools' paradise. The socialists know better; they are wiser in their own generation than the so-called children of light; they understand that they must govern by the discipline of force and not by appeals to the heart.

And this law holds good not only in relation to socialism but for any other form of government; it holds because of the bitter fact that wherever sentiment comes into open conflict with the innate egotism of mankind and the innate will to power, sentiment simply shrivels up as a motive of conduct. It is too often forgotten that the same Adam Smith who, in *The Wealth of Nations*, formulated the law of competitive industrialism, was also the author of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. On the one hand, according to the economic treatise the greed of individuals aiming each at his own enrichment would by the bare result of competition and *laisser-faire* balance out in general welfare and content. On the other hand the apparent barbarity of so mechanical a system is humanized by the moral sentiment of sympathy which causes a man to suffer involuntarily with another in calamity or to rejoice with another in prosperity, and which checks any overweening impulse of greed and dominion by participation in the feeling of resentment aroused in the victim of injustice. It might seem as if this balance of natural selfishness and natural sympathy would act as a substitute for the ethical dualism expressed in the Platonic and Biblical psychology of a warfare within our members, with the need that a man's first duty is to be master of himself. And it is true that the counterplay of natural instincts did, and does, simulate the working of the classical ethics. But to a very limited degree, and only in a few outstanding characters. In the main Adam Smith's combination of *laisser-faire* with moral sentiments, as it was put into practice by the succeeding age, resulted in that competitive industrialism which came to a climax in the so-called Manchester school of economics, and from which the world today is swinging towards an equally hard-bitten communism. Nor is the reason for this difficult to detect if we follow out Adam Smith's acute analysis of the operation of the law of natural sympathy.

"It is not", Smith declares, "the love of our neighbour, it is not the love of mankind, which upon many occasions prompts us to the practice of those divine virtues [that is, the virtues of justice and unselfishness]. It is a stronger love, a more powerful affection, which generally takes place upon such occasions; the love of what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur and dignity and superiority of our own characters." That would seem to be setting morality on a very different basis from bare instinctive sympathy. But mark the sequel. This love of the honourable and noble turns out to be no more than a sense of our own superiority, a bit of vanity, and our vanity turns out to be only a reflex of sympathy by which we feel for ourselves the indignation felt by those who might suffer from our rapacity. And very characteristically the operation of this sympathy is to keep the poor in their place and to render the rich secure in their possessions. "The poor man", our moralist continues, "must neither defraud nor steal from the rich, though the acquisition might be much more beneficial to the one than the loss could be hurtful to the other. The man within immediately calls to him in this case, too, that he is no better than his neighbour, and that by his unjust preference he renders himself the proper object of the contempt and indignation of mankind, as well as of the punishment which that contempt and indignation must naturally dispose them to inflict." In other words the moral sentiment of sympathy, when put to the test, becomes a mere veneer upon the law of absolute self-interest. What we really have is a philosophy that unchains the natural instincts of men and believes that out of the conflicts of such impulses progress evolves by a sort of mechanical determinism.

Now I am not supposing that any churchmen of today will admit the approximation of his ethics to the sentimental naturalism of Adam Smith. He will asseverate that the sentiment he advocates as a check upon the wolfish appetites of mankind has its source in the supernatural and comes to him through the grace of God; and that the brotherhood of Christianity calls for a reversal of Adam Smith's order by placing the obligation of self-control primarily upon the rich rather than upon the poor. But is the distinction as sharp really as the churchman deems it? Oh, I know there is a difference. The Church cannot forget the first and great commandment which directs us to the love of God, and cannot, even with the best endeavour, hide the fact that the second commandment, though like unto the first, is subsidiary to it. I know that our pulpits and our pious literature resound with exhortations to the pure love of God. That is well, no doubt; it is a true element of religion. And yet—if you will bear with my rude and perhaps crude comment—when, hearing these sermons, I look about at the congregation, including myself, and when, reading these books of piety, I try to calculate their probable effect upon others like myself, then depressing doubts creep upon me; I cannot away with them. After all, what does the love of God mean to the average man in the pew? If I may judge from myself, nay, if I can judge from what I see and hear, it is to us for the most part a beautiful phrase, and only at rare intervals anything more solid than that. And—dare I ask?—does it often mean anything quite clear and definite and dynamic to the priest who repeats the phrase as a kind of acquired and holy habit?

Such questions are audacious, and may proclaim nothing more than my own incompetence as a critic of religion. But when it comes to the love of one's neighbour, I dare speak with more assurance. It does not sound a hollow phrase, this second commandment, on the lips of the preacher; it does not fall without genuine, often exciting, effect upon the ears of the listener. But I note this curious and disconcerting fact. Commonly in practice—not always, not constantly, but commonly in practice—the pleading for brotherly love gains in vividness and clarity and directness and sometimes in passionate urgency, just in proportion as the pleading for love to Godward becomes vague in outline and muddy in texture, while perhaps conventionally exaggerated in expression. I do not say that this should be so; indeed it should not be so. But I assert it as a fact within my experience; and it all leads on to the horrid insistent question, whether this sentimental socialism, which threatens to become official with the Church, does not spring from depletion rather than from surplus of faith, whether its fervour for economic change does not imply a dullness towards things of the spirit, whether the love to which it appeals, despite the traditional language of theology sometimes, though now not very often, draped about it, is in substance much more than the instinctive sympathy of Adam Smith and the naturalists intensified to the fanaticism of religion.

This is not to imply that the sentiment of Christian love is purely illusory and futile. That sentiment does in persons of rare gifts bear beautiful and precious fruit; it may even have some effect in mitigating the cruelties of social life. So the naturalistic sentiment of sympathy showed itself here and there in sweetening the characters of men caught in the hard industrialism of the Manchester school of economics. But by and large neither the sentimental love of the Christian nor the sentimental sympathy of the avowed naturalist, left to itself, can be trusted when brought into rivalry with the naturalistic impulses of greed and expansion and the naturalistic will to power. History proves too clearly that the feeling for others, whether religious or naturalistic, in general simply crumples up at the touch of the feeling for self when the more unruly passions are aroused. The capitalistic society of today is our witness, and the lords of the Russian communism have learned the truth which the sentimental socialists of the Church are refusing to face. Lenin understood that the success of revolution depends on capitalizing, so to speak, the individual's will to power as the will of a particular class.

What then shall we say? Must religion forgo any purpose to save society and must it limit itself to the salvation of a few exceptional persons, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot"? And even so, how is the individual soul to be reached? I remember the righteous indignation with which a young priest once turned upon me with the question, for him a very practical problem, how he could bring any thought of religion to a man distracted with the anxieties of unemployment, or how he could talk to a man of his soul's welfare while the body was unfed. Well, is it impertinent to quote the words of Christ in the wilderness after he had fasted forty days and the devil bade him turn the stones into bread? Certainly Christ did not confuse religion with food or think it should be deferred until the hunger of the body was satisfied. Hunger is an evil, no doubt; it should be alleviated. But hunger is not the only evil of life, or the most devastating. There are pains of the flesh more agonizing than starvation; there are calamities more terrible than social injustice. And what is your religion worth unless it can bring healing to the broken-hearted and to the downtrodden a hope not of this world? What a mockery is made of the gospel if it cannot be preached to a man until the iniquities of society have been set right. Is that the spirit of the beatitudes? The call of religion is first of all and last of all to a soul conscious of its own guilt, the function of religion is first of all and last of all to offer to a soul despairing of this world's peace the promise of eternal life. When under the shadow of an atrocious death Christ said to his disciples: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,"—when he uttered these words, perhaps of all the words that fell from his lips the most wonderful, he was not announcing a gospel of economic regeneration or postponing the hope of peace until the wrongs of capitalism should be overcome, nor was he identifying the moral obligations of the individual soul with a sentimental socialism. If you care to know the logical outcome of involving religion in a social programme, read the *Reflections on the End of an Era* recently published by Reinhold Niebuhr. In that brilliant and startling and at the last fatalistic and totally irreligious book, this is the conclusion you will hear: for the moral man of today the only choice is "between hypocrisy and vengeance", the hypocrisy of a moralized industrialism and the vengeance of a moralized communism.

Is then—the question is insistent—the only mission of Christianity to rescue a few wrecks from the outrageous seas of worldliness? has it no help for the community? To this extent it has none, that to immerse the church in politics, whether it be of a feudalistic or capitalistic or fascist or communistic type, is to abandon the Kingdom of Heaven for a eutopian mockery. To this extent, that to identify the driving force of religion with an outgoing sentiment of love is to leave mankind a prey to the unsentimental forces of nature.

Religion, I insist, is concerned primarily with the individual soul, and in that concern must now and always reckon with the fact that, whatever the organization of society may be, sorrows there will be in this earthly existence, and above all other causes of sorrow the sting of transitoriness and the tragedy of death; and religion must now and always reckon with the terrible fact of sin. I am not inferring that the concern of religion for the individual may not, and should not, have its repercussion in the relations of man to man. My doubt of the dominant attitude of the Church in these matters is that she tends to mistake the goal and to rely on insufficient means. This everlasting note of sentimental socialism, however it be named or left unnamed, seems to indicate that the Church has set her heart on the creation of an equalitarian brotherhood as the Christian opposed to the pagan ideal of society. But equalitarianism is an impossible ideal for the simple reason that men are not, and will not be, the same, and that they are not equal. Certainly if the history of the last twenty years has taught anything, it is that mankind is not capable of self-government. The communist as well as the fascist or the monarchist has learnt that an efficient organization cannot be erected on an equalitarian basis. They know that men are divided roughly into three main groups: the mass of those who must be externally controlled by fear or by blind obedience; a ruling body, whether an individual or a committee, which holds the reins and drives, ostensibly at least, for the good of the whole; and an intermediary class who voluntarily submit to direction and upon whose allegiance to the principles embodied in the actual government the stability of the state depends. And equalitarianism, even were it practicable, is an unethical ideal, because it slurs over the fact of human depravity and so weakens the moral sense by attributing all the ills of life to society and none to the individual sufferer. It is in line with this shifting of emphasis that I hear so much about the rights of man and virtually never a word about his personal responsibility. Justice demands a more equal balance between the two.

And the idea of brotherhood, though praiseworthy in itself, seems to me, as it is actually advocated, to imply a reliance on inadequate means. Whatever the ultimate, or temporary, form of government towards which we are drifting, surely the contribution of Christianity should be to moderate the natural passions of men, to chain the innate will to power, to check the expansive lust of possession, and to make the right prevail in place of sheer might. But this precisely is what the principle of sympathy alone will not do. Against the egotism of the natural man that motive, unsupported by a stronger appeal to the spirit, will leave society defenceless against the inhuman determinism of an Adam Smith or a Karl Marx.

If this were all, the Church would be in a bad way, and there would be some excuse for the growing indifference of the secular mind to religion as a pretty but feckless annex, if not a malignant obstacle, to the fatalistic operation of economic laws. But it is not all.

Sympathy and love are good in themselves; they are sentimental when they fail to take account of what from the beginning and everywhere, not only in Christianity but in all the great religions, has been the real stay of the spirit in its competition with the lusts of the flesh. It was not the love of God or of man by itself that started the Church upon its victorious course. Preponderantly it was the preaching of the imminent Kingdom of Heaven that united the little band of disciples about their Lord, and that Kingdom was conceived vividly in terms of the supernatural; it was in essence not sociological but eschatological. The preaching of Jesus began with the terrifying threat: *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;* it closed with the sublime assumption: *I am, and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*

The early community of Christians was dominated by this belief, and we can see exactly how, as the parousia was deferred decade by decade and the expected catastrophe did not occur, the hope and fear of the imminent kingdom gave way to the thought of an otherworldly heaven and hell and of judgement to come after death. The driving force of religion remained eschatological; only the scene and the time were changed. And so the idea passed on through the dark centuries to the Middle Ages and beyond. The great commandment was not forgotten. The uncompelled love of God mastered the souls of a few of the mystics so deeply that they were in spirit rapt from the world; the love of man inspired some of the saints to heroic devotions of self-sacrifice. But for society at large, for the ordinary believers, the love of God was intimately, and wholesomely, mingled with fear; it was God the Judge before whom they bowed in trembling awe, and His sentences were the eternity of heaven and the eternity of hell. If you have any doubt of this, recall the pictures of the Last Day, or read the extracts from the sermons of the Middle Ages in Dr. Owst's huge collection. Not the sentiment of love, not appeals to sympathy, but a lively imaginative grasp of spiritual values made the Church a power to mitigate, if she could not eradicate, the egotistical passions of men and to give some cohesion to society. And still, if you think this a passing phase of the Christian faith at a dark period of its history, then turn to your Lucretius and learn from him how hopes and fears of the future life haunted the mind of pagan antiquity; or study the annals of a greater religion than that of Greece and see how for the Buddhist the otherworldly judgements of Karma gave sanction to the precepts of morality, while the endless weariness of transmigration drove the more sensitive souls to longing for the peace of Nirvana.

And unless the Church of today can recapture some of that realization of spiritual values her preaching of love to God will fall on ever deafer ears, and her pleas for the brotherhood of man will evaporate into a sigh or do a little to hasten the advent of an anti-religious state governed by those who understand human nature better than she. I do not say that even so the Church will convert the world to a community of saints or install that sentimental socialism for which she is yearning; human nature will not be altered to that extent, nor have we any warrant in scripture or history or psychology to suppose that sin with its hideous consequences will disappear. But of this I am convinced, that the one effective weapon of the Church in her campaign against the unnecessary evils of society, her one available instrument for bringing into play some measure of true justice as distinct from the ruthless law of competition and from the equally ruthless will to power of the proletariat, is through the restoration in the individual human soul of a sense of responsibility extending beyond the grave. I am aware of the difficulties attached to such a programme. The mediaeval realism of heaven and hell, with their physical delights and tortures as we see them portrayed in a Dante, has gone; and we would not return to it, if we could. But some equivalent for the hopes and fears connected with such an eschatology we must discover. We must reawaken the minds of men to the fact that this earthly existence is only a small segment of everlasting life, that its significance lies hidden in the long reaches of the future, that somehow the results of what we do here and now will pursue the soul in her flight through eternity with a train of blessings or curses, that salvation and damnation are not empty words but awful possibilities fraught with infinities of peace or despair. How that shall be accomplished, how these spiritual truths are to be re-clothed in the garments of the imagination and made persuasive to the conscience it is not for me to say; that will be the task of you who are going out into the world as authoritative spokesmen of the Church. Only so much I would conjecture, that the path to such a reformation lies through a sounder conception and a broader expansion of the Catholic doctrine of the sacramental nature of life.

John Taylor and the Political Economy of Agriculture

ANDREW NELSON LYTLE

THE study of American history is a most disheartening occupation. If it is taken to be the record of those acts which have precipitated the sorry evils responsible for the chaos of modern society, there is only one conclusion to be drawn—it tells the triumph of senseless greed. No other explanation appears to account for the viciously rapid destruction of the physical treasures of a continent, treasures once so rich that, had they been intelligently husbanded, they might have kept a vast body of people in plenty for a thousand years. The waste of these resources is the dissipation of the physical basis for a healthy state of society. The destruction began seriously after the first American revolution; proceeded with devastating speed through the nineteenth century; and has now, in the first third of the twentieth, brought us to the prospect of a long period of economic and political servility.

The physical resources of this continent were bait thrown to jerk from their natural currents those social and political ideas intended to secure to the farmers living under the new Union the gatherings of their fields and to the townsmen the reward of craftsmanship. The early republican leaders of the Revolution had manoeuvred to make the Union a medium pliable but strong enough to generate such well-being. It was understood by these men that private property must be generally distributed throughout the body politic; otherwise the state is corrupted by its core and is destroyed by the very agency which, with better luck, would have given it life. They failed—but not until after a long and bitter fight. Their failure is our tragedy, for it has robbed posterity of its inheritance. Now there is everywhere such general discontent, so much criticism of those who have transferred to their aimless use the energies of millions of people, that all earnestly look for a way out. In view of this it might be profitable to take from the obscurity into which he has fallen, a gentleman who exerted his talents and strength to oppose the trend taken by American affairs: John Taylor of Caroline County, Virginia.

He was born in Orange County during the middle of the eighteenth century. His family and connections were gentle people, belonging to that squirearchy which ruled Virginia and the United States for so long. Left an orphan at the age of ten, he went to live with his mother's brother, Edmund Pendleton, a gentleman of parts in the Colony. He was prepared by tutors for William and Mary College. After graduation he read law, entered politics, and helped to destroy the political machine which had governed Virginia for twenty years. He had attached himself to Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee in this matter and was to be found acting with them throughout the Revolution and their campaign to keep Virginia out of the new Union. When the fighting began, the Continental Congress elected him a major. He took part in the campaigns around New York and Philadelphia; but when it became necessary to reorganize the army at Valley Forge, he refused to serve as a private and retired to Caroline County. From here he entered the House of Delegates and worked for the retirement of Washington, whose management of the army he disapproved. When danger threatened from the South, however, he took to the field again and remained under arms until the surrender at Yorktown. The war ruined him, but he was granted five thousand acres of western land for his services. He turned to account his knowledge of law and managed to accumulate a considerable fortune during those fat years of 1781-1792. Then, following the inclination of his kind, he bought Hazelwood, an estate near Port Royal, Virginia, and went there to live the life of a country gentleman . . . in the fullest sense of that phrase.

It is hard today for the understanding to grasp the place and function of the country gentleman in Taylor's time. This is because agriculture—not Southern alone—has been degraded since the North-and-South war. It has been only a province to be annually denuded for the uses industrial-corporate finance might have for its treasure. But before his overthrow the country gentleman was the most powerful single influence in early American society. His decline and fall measures the decline and fall of American independence. When he ruled the Union, his political action came directly out of a complete philosophy of life. It had, naturally enough, its limitations; but since the gentleman's basic idea of the Union's polity was the preservation of private property, society had a stability it has never had since, under the rule of irresponsible financiers who have usurped the powers of government but have refused the responsibility of this power. This confusing condition did not attend the gentleman's rule. Because his wealth and power depended partly upon his personal relations with the governed, he assumed the moral responsibility for his action; and when the economic well-being of his society was threatened, he did not shirk his obligations. If he failed to maintain the independence and dignity of the agrarian concept of this society, it was not from any ignorance of the forces which threatened it or of the means to be used to preserve it. It was because the fortunes of war are unpredictable.

II

When Taylor set himself up at Hazlewood, agriculture was falling into desuetude. It was still the most honourable occupation for a gentleman, but there were two forces threatening its continued well-being. Externally, in the political world, the Federalists from the East challenged its supremacy; internally the farm economy had become inefficient and extravagant. The thin soils of the eastern shore had become exhausted by a reckless cultivation, and the farms were slow to recover from the neglect of eight years of warfare. Taylor, as a member of the feudal aristocracy, at once set to work to reform the economics of agriculture and overthrow the dangerous Federalists. He became one of Jefferson's best lieutenants and the publicist for the party in Virginia. In 1803 he published, under the title *Arator*, a collection of articles on farming. The thesis of the book is that agriculture and politics are the sources of wealth and liberty. Both contain internal good principles, but both are liable to practical deterioration. If one is vitiated in practice, poverty ensues; if the other, oppression. If the agriculture is good and the government bad, we may have wealth and slavery. If the government is good and agriculture bad, liberty and poverty. The third alternative is implicit in his argument: a bad government and a bad culture of the land. It has been left to this generation to know the terrifying effects which follow from this state—servility with poverty.

To be able to establish in the Union the desired political economy for agriculture it was first necessary to institute for the farms and plantations a more intelligent agronomy. Towards this end Taylor laid down certain generalizations which are as important today as they were then. First, the land must sustain that fraction of the population living on it; next, the farmer must have a surplus to exchange for those products his land cannot bring forth economically and for which he feels the need. To make this possible the strength of the soil which is withdrawn in the form of crops or vanishes by way of erosion must be returned and added to. Care for the soil is basic, but the buildings and fences are constantly falling into disrepair and must be mended and made stout and trim.

In the prevailing plantation economy, when the fields fell exhausted, the planter turned them out to sage and cleared fresh grounds to be mangled by the same irresponsible cycle. Cattle wandered about the country and wasted their manure on the public roads; and, if they escaped starvation over the winter, were driven up when leather or meat, of poor quality always, was needed. There was nothing permanent or profitable about this sort of farming, and Taylor saw ruin ahead if it continued. It was making a western nomad of the labourer, confining him to the hardships of pioneering and threatening the stability of the Union. For no state is secure unless it has a sturdy agricultural body to rest upon, and the agriculture of a people is rarely secure unless the cultivators work continuously the same acreage. This should be a primary axiom of political economy. That nation which abuses its farmers is committing suicide, and when it becomes necessary for a government agent to feed a landed tenant and dictate how much or how little his land will produce, the condition of that nation is desperate.

The greatest single cause of soil impoverishment Taylor believed to be that prime minister of plantation government, the overseer. It was customary to pay his wages with a share of the crop. This meant, in effect, that the master and his chief lieutenant connived together to impoverish the land, since it was to the overseer's interest to make as large a crop as possible.

> It is common [writes Taylor] for an industrious overseer, after a very few years, to quit a farm on account of the barrenness, occasioned by his own industry; and frequent changes of these itinerant managers of agriculture, each striving to extract the remnant of fertility left by his predecessor, combines with our agricultural ignorance, to form the completest system of impoverishment, of which any other country can boast.

Since overseers seemed essential, he suggests a regular wage as the cure. Planters, especially small ones in the middle South, were to find the solution by setting over their hands a responsible slave.

This vice is to be seen in the South today in the much more aggravated form of the share-cropper. Instead of one man it becomes the practice of every farm labourer to destroy the soil; and it is bound to be ruined with more efficiency and speed, since a number of men can do more damage than one. This system was fastened on the planting states during Reconstruction by Eastern and English capital which, in the post-war extremity, could be had to finance the money crops and only the money crops. The white and black cultivators who took the place of slavery were forbidden to grow anything but cotton and tobacco. Land spared for gardens was the exception, since gardens reduced the profits of the furnishing system. This introduced that abstract slavery feared and prophesied by Taylor and Calhoun. The planter no longer exercised the responsibility of the master; the relationship had become a business matter, that is, it was predatory. The tenant depended upon the planter for his food; the planter upon the local merchant or the bank when he acted as merchant; the local merchant upon the wholesale house; the wholesale house upon its bank; the provincial bank upon some New York or London house, those private rulers of the public credit which belonged to all as private citizens. There was the excuse of necessity for this bargain during Reconstruction. Now it is madness. And yet it is hard to find where to lay the blame. The inertia which is so salutary when society is strong becomes the greatest deterrent to the return of a healthful condition when its functions are congested. The tenant cannot afford to improve land which may be worked by somebody else the following spring, and the landlords are so hard-pressed by the system that they are unable to take any out of cultivation for its much-needed rest. A four-shift system is well-nigh impossible with itinerant cultivators.

The personal slavery of Taylor's day had the great virtue of fixing the worker to the soil and defining the relationship between master and man. The loss of this has done farming incalculable damage. If means were found to put people back on the land and bind them to it, the problems of agriculture would not solve themselves overnight—there are too many things sucking away at its vitality—but until this is done, there can be no cure for the soil's anaemic state. The English in better days discovered that even a twenty-one-year lease was too short a time for the land to receive careful culture. A long lease is only one method, and it concerns only that body of the population which requires the landlord-tenant status. Bulking large in any agrarian state, there must always be the small, independent farmer who believes that no man can do better than take his living from the ground by the sweat of his brow and the grip of his hands. His small estate must be cultivated like a garden; and, though it will be necessary for him to sell part of his surplus, this should concern him less than it concerns the large farmer. His aim should be not to make money but to make as good a living as his land allows; and that will be, taking into consideration the original strength of the soil, as good as his intelligent attention to the arts of farming will allow. The present administration's experiment in subsistence farming is a move towards the re-establishment of this class of men; but the implication, that it is a way to diminish unemployment and avoid the dole, is negative. It has all the earmarks of a temporary measure which is to be abandoned when the country swings back into the highway of prosperity. As such it will never lay the foundations of a sturdy yeomanry.

III

After dealing with those things which destroy fertility, Taylor next takes up the matter of restoration. There are three kinds of manure: mineral, vegetable, and atmospherical. He is inclined to link together vegetable and atmosphere as the same thing. Mineral manure is applied directly. Vegetable manure presents complications. It is destroyed by a bad system of grazing, especially summer grazing. The three-shift system was responsible for this: that is, corn one year; wheat the next; and the land turned out to grazing the third year. It is common knowledge, he says, that both corn and wheat exhaust the soil two out of the three years. The question to be answered is: Does a third year of grazing restore it? The ground is soft from recent tillage; the cattle tramp restlessly over its sparsely covered surface in search of nourishment. The pores of the earth are closed and beaten to death. The sun bakes it and the winds crack it. The repetition of this soon finds the cattle starving to death on land that has been abused. The three-shift system has only one merit. It promises to kill the lands: in practice it fulfils this promise.

As an escape from this Taylor suggests inclosing and the four-shift system. As a first principle he separates land to be grazed from land to be cultivated. With clear logic he argues that grazing and cultivation are always at cross-purposes. He might have said they represent two ages of society, pastoral and agrarian. The cultivator works to kill the grasses which are the life of grazing, whereas the pasture to give nourishment must abound in the cover which is so detrimental to the hoe and plow. In his four-shift system one-fourth of the farm is put down in a permanent pasture. This would be made up principally of the wet lands. Of the land to be cultivated, one-third will be rested in clovers every third year; of the land left so much will be put in corn and so much in wheat, according to the needs of the farm. The cattle will be penned and manure made by their droppings and a litter of corn stalks and leaves. This will, in rotation, be spread over and plowed as quickly as possible into the lands under cultivation. According to results from experiments over a period of fifteen years he found that one-fourth of a farm will produce as much as the entire place did under the three-shift system. To strengthen this economy he insists on rock or live-tree fences built on a rise. Besides the labour wasted in the repair of dead-wood fences, they have still a greater drawback: they do not protect the soil from washing. A farm bound by rock or green cedar fences, properly drained by open and closed ditches, about whose details he is very specific, cultivated on the four-shift plan, will reward the farmer and his labourers for their industry.

As to the labour which cultivates the land, it must be well-housed, well-fed, and well-clothed. Taylor warns his readers that a strict discipline, stern authority, and complete subordination must be combined to attain any success at all. The free Negro he declares a nuisance to society. He has freedom without position or property. This renders him open to any mischievous influence and increases pilfering. He interferes with the accepted form of labour and makes it dissatisfied with its lot. Taylor advocated removal by colonization or by more desperate measures. The fact that labour took the form of personal slavery in Taylor's time does not completely invalidate his directions on this matter. The Negro is free, if you like; but he is still a Negro. This fact means that the fundamental relationship between the races is unchanged. His position now is subordinate whereas formerly it was servile, but it is questionable whether he has gained by the change. He owns property, but he has no political power to insure this ownership. A great body of his race works on the farms of the dominant race. Any outside influence which stirs up trouble makes him inefficient as a labourer, and makes successful farming doubtful. The Communist Party and all such factions who aim to upset the *status quo* stand in the shoes of the Abolitionists and free Negroes of the days of the old Union. They cannot be disciplined because they stand without the jurisdiction of Southern governments; but their agents in the South can and should be dealt with, with the greatest severity. The Southern governments have failed in this, and they are suffering from their impotency. They fail to act because they fear outside opinion. The relative positions of the races is tacitly accepted; it should be openly stated. The increase in lynchings stems in-directly from this. It is a sign that governments are refusing to function on a matter vital to the states—not because they fail to apprehend and punish the lynchers but because they have countenanced mischievous opinions which have raised false hopes among certain members of the subordinate race. Mobs in a civilized state are the more responsible citizens resuming delegated functions of government because their agents failed to exercise these functions. Mass action of this sort is always an act of self-preservation. It indicates that race integrity must not be tampered with. The liberal attitude of Southern cities shows how far they have isolated themselves from the countryside and how far they have become the exploiting agency of industrialism. The South is being shaken by this, but in a crisis it is always clear on fundamental issues. The real wealth and voting power belongs to the country; and if the issue becomes acute enough, the cities may again be reduced to their proper positions, places of exchange for the country's produce.

This discussion at first may appear irrelevant; but it is one purpose of this essay to show that Southern interests, customs, economics, and problems have been, still are, and will be, fundamentally the same. The character of its people, its soil and climate, its geography, its history, and its relations to the other sections have determined this. To ignore it is to beckon disaster with both hands; and disaster does not always fall below the Mason and Dixon Line, as the rest of this continent has learned.

After everything else is considered, there is one general principle underlying all successful farming—liberality. It is, according to Taylor, the solitary human occupation to which the adage, "the more we give the more we shall receive", can be justly applied. A pinching miserly system may very well keep a farmer alive, but it will never make his living bountiful. Great profits depend upon great improvements of the soil, and great improvements can never be made by penurious efforts. The discrimination between useful and productive and useless and barren expenses contain the agricultural secret for acquiring plenty and happiness. A good farmer will sow the first with an open hand, but he will eradicate every seed of the other. Diminutions of comforts, necessaries, and expense are too often mistaken for the means of producing the ends they obstruct.

> The cottagers [writes Taylor] who inflict upon themselves and their families the discomforts of cold houses, bad bedding, and insufficient clothing to acquire wealth destroy the vigour both of mind and body necessary for obtaining the contemplated end at which, of course, they never arrive. The farmer who starves his slaves, is a still greater sufferer. He loses the profits produced by health, strength, and alacrity; and suffers the losses caused by disease, short life, weakness, and dejection.

IV

Liberality to the earth in culture and manure makes a bountiful harvest. Liberality to slaves and work stock is the strength which gathers it. Liberality in warm houses produces health, strength, and comfort; preserves the lives of thousands of domestic animals; causes all animals to thrive on less food; and secures from damage all kinds of crops. And the liberality in the utensils of culture saves a great deal of work.

Liberality, however, is impossible without foresight. Foresight consists in preparing work for all weather and doing all work in the right weather. Many a crop is lost by impatience. Plowing too wet can ruin the ground and make the plants perish. Planting out of season is equally injurious. Perhaps the most exciting moments in a farmer's life are those when he must decide which crops will be worked after a week's rain. Impatience to catch up will often mean the doing of the same thing twice. This is to be avoided. It is vicious, expensive, and keeps the hands on the run—in circles. Under such an economy the hands will be constantly occupied, but there will be little to show for their labour; and the planter driven always by makeshift plans will be denied that leisurely activity and peace of mind always reflected upon the brow of the man who is vassal but not slave to nature.

And this is the end the goodman and master should seek, for then each knows the joys of agriculture. And they are the fullest and most satisfying the intellect and sensibility can know. Under a free government nature continually throws out from its secret places inexhaustible sources of human pleasure. It fits ideas to substances and substances to ideas in a constant rotation of hope and fruition. With a passion for proper living somehow lost to this century Taylor's words break away from the usual constraint of his prose:

> The novelty, frequency, and exactness of accommodations between our ideas and operations, constitutes the most exquisite source of mental pleasure. Agriculture feeds it with endless supplies in the natures of soils, plants, climates, manures, instruments of culture, and

domestic animals. Their combinations are inexhaustible, and an unsatiated interest receives gratifications in quick succession. . . . Poetry, in allowing more virtue to agriculture, than to any other profession, has abandoned her privilege of fiction and yielded to the natural moral effect of the absence of temptation. The same fact is commemorated by religion, upon an occasion the most solemn, within the scope of the human imagination. At the awful day of judgment, the discrimination of the good from the wicked, is not made by the criterion of sects or dogmas, but by one which constitutes the daily employment and the great end of agriculture. The judge upon this occasion has by anticipation pronounced, that to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and give drink to the thirsty, are the passports to future happiness; and the divine intelligence which selected an agricultural state as a Paradise for its favourites, has here again prescribed the agricultural virtues as the means for the admission of their posterity into heaven.

Genuine agronomy is also the best patriot. A conqueror may double a nation's territory; but a nation's farmers can double the territory by making it twice as fertile, and without the expenditure of blood and treasure attendant upon foreign conquest, or the threat to the state always lurking in the ranks of a victorious army. Not one agricultural virtue does Taylor neglect to extol. He reduces them all to a comprehensive phrase–agriculture is the architect of the complete man. The American continent is the suitable background for his habitation. It has a climate and soil where good culture never fails to beget plenty and where bad cannot produce famine; it is favoured by accident with the power of self-government; the risk of invasion is less than in other countries.

In the face of such odds agriculture can only lose its happiness by the folly or fraud of statesmen, or by its own ignorance. Taylor's thorough experiments in plantation economy had gone far towards the substitution of knowledge for ignorance. If they did not prove equal to all soils and all conditions of farm life, certainly his agrarian principles must always be the principles which will be the universal underpinning to a stable agriculture.

But without political protection a good country life is impossible. Indeed a proper agrarian economy cannot function without its counterpart, an agrarian polity. The security of the agricultural states is dependent upon the political acumen of those first citizens who rule. All the improvements man can add to the arts of farming and the crafts of the town do not make for his prosperity if he has lost his political freedom through the folly or fraud of statesmen. The more he builds up his soil, and the more he produces upon it, by that much more does he enrich some special interest which is using the government for its private ends. The end of the eighteenth century saw two conflicting political moralities. The triumph of one meant the defeat of Taylor's way of life. This state of conflict turned Taylor from the economics of the farm to politics for farmers—which brings us to the second part of his political economy.

(*To be concluded*)

The Shortest Way Out Was to the Left

NORMAN MATSON

WORDS as we Americans use them do not mean what they mean on the other side of the ocean. When, speaking the literal truth, I say that I was born in the shadow of a factory in an industrial town of the Middle West and raised in a tenement in a working-class district of San Francisco, the pictures that flash in the minds of my friends from London—and Moscow (for an example)—are likely to have very little to do with the pictures stored in my memory. The house, as a matter of fact, had eight rooms, not counting the summer kitchen, and a damson plum grew by the door of the white barn. The street was paved, bordered by wide cement walks, and shaded for two miles with great sugar maples. As for that tenement in the working-class district of San Francisco, it was a corner flat with a bay-windowed parlour. There were two gas grates, one in the dining room (which was beamed and had a built-in buffet), the other in the parlour. There were three bedrooms, a large kitchen, laundry, and a very small room with shelves that we called the "library". No one of the seven of us slept in that room, mind, though there was a leather couch there beside a desk. It wasn't a part-time bedroom. It was the *library*. Now when as a young Socialist I socialistically related the hardships of my youth to my Socialist friends I did not stress the fact of our library. I did not say: "There was my poor father, exhausted from his toiling in the factory, lying stretched out on the leather couch in the *library* reading Pickwick Papers, laughing till it hurt him because Samuvel was making faces by the pump." That would have been true, but it would have dimmed the stark outlines of whatever picture my friends might get out of the phrase "a tenement in a working-class district".

II

The trouble with the district, according to a young equalitarian like me, was that there was much too much equality there. This sounds screwy, I'll freely admit, but I'm trying to make it all as clear as possible. I intended to get out and away even if I had to work to do it, so I went to night high school. In this wonderful country, when a boy feels superior to his working-class Dad and his working-class neighbours he often formally joins the working class. Some try, of course, for the upper class, but that is likely to take longer. Despising the masses as enthusiastically as I did, therefore, it was inevitable that I should write poems for a magazine called *The Masses*. My motives for leaving the working class to join the Working Class seemed to me to be sound, honest, intellectual. I had read books by several very rich men, including Spargo and W. E. Walling, and had agreed with them; I had met and talked with charming people. With one step I got out of a world centered by that miserable eight-room flat with its golden oak, its bird's-eye maple, its sunny bay windows, its neighbours who were all just alike; who were equal and believed in equality, in other words; and then where was I? In a two-room "apartment" in an Italian slum —no upright piano here, no "beamed" dining room, certainly no sunny bay window, you may be sure of that! But there was a big fire-place. It burned logs, instead of gas. The logs cost like the devil, but never mind: and on the wall do you think there were photographs, or half-tones? Certainly not! *Machine-made pictures?* Too modern and so not Modern! On my walls were *wood-cuts*, of course!

In this new world nobody worked, not as we defined work on the railroad. I mean that those who were not wood-engravers, or poets, or student-Lenins, were newspaper reporters, so limp from long loafing they lay down as soon as they arrived in my apartment. The engravers and the student-Lenins and the poets got their incomes, of course, from stocks and bonds.

To sum up: by espousing the Working Class I had escaped the tiresome company of workers, and I had escaped work, too. (I had abandoned railroading for journalism.) By going Modern I had acquired a fine pair of brass andirons and a seventeenth-century chair and hand-made engravings. By formally declaring war on the Capitalists I for the first time met capitalists, and I liked them very much, indeed.

III

I shall never forget my first visit to a revolutionary print-shop. With Ruthie—a blonde who hadn't yet decided whether to give her life to Birth Control, Aviation, or Anarchism—I got there one sunny day walking a mile or so uphill from the end of a trolley line. Two revolutionaries emerged from a cottage, a cottage buried in pink roses and grape vines, surrounded by vegetable gardens. They wore high boots, corduroys, soft shirts, the collars open. One had a brown beard. We ate under the grape vines on a flagstone terrace. There were green peppers *sauté* in olive oil, a beef stew ladled up from a great brown bowl that was lop-sided because it was, of course, hand-turned, French bread, red wine, artichokes, Port-Salut. A humble proletarian repast. We were "jungling-up". A carpenter, a dull fellow, had owned this place. Of course the Reds had laid out the terrace; the big room with the new stone fire-place, that had been three measly little rooms. (The carpenter, poor fellow, had a lot of kids.) Over there, the little print-shop with its sign hanging from that hand-made iron bracket, that had been the chicken-coop!

And what did these two charming fellows preach in their little paper? They preached (hold your hat!) the complete industrialization, the *mechanization* of human life! Oh, yes, Society was to be a cogged wheel, they had diagrams to prove it; they were, in fact, members of the Industrial Workers of the World! And Brownbeard told my friend Ruthie that she was dressed like a little *bourgeoise*. He meant fashionably; he meant that her clothes had come from the big factories, the big stores, that the heels of her shoes were too high. He meant that she was dressed too much like one of the masses to be running about with a *Masses* poet!

IV

All this reminds me suddenly of the hot-water tank in the kitchen of Jack Reed's house in Croton-on-

Hudson; a quaint little house (he wrote much of his *Ten Days That Shook the World* there) and the only visible product of the machine age in it was that hot-water tank. So it was disguised. It was painted over with tropical foliage and parrots—very bright and very quaint; primitive, you know? That made it Modern, and not modern, and so it was in key with that radical, forward-looking interior. But a man can get all tangled up going on like this; anyway Jack, Hero of the American Working Class Movement, didn't stay there in Croton. Trippers began coming in, ordinary people who had jobs in New York, so he moved to a quainter, older farmhouse in a lonely part of sparsely settled Truro, Cape Cod. It had an *enormous* fire-place and the front room was panelled to the ceiling.

Now my confession is that I agreed with the Reds —and I've known them from Telegraph Hill to Greenwich Village, from Chelsea to Montparnasse, St. Paul, Toulouse, Rome, Florence, Vienna, not to forget Provincetown—from my own labour newspaper in California to the copy desk of the New York *Call*, *The Masses*, the staffs of the London *Daily Herald*, *L'Humanité* of Paris, etc. etc.,—from Bombacci in his huge hat, a blond and beautiful tall man, in a Roman café, to bald Rappaport and little Balabonova on the Rive Gauche, to Karolyi in a muddy village on the border of Austria and Comrade Stern, ex-Commissar of Transportation for Bela Kun, exiled in the Republic of San Marino; from Arthur McManus, president of the British Communist Party, witty, kind—a good man who laughed and laughed telling Glasgow stories in the rooms we shared in

Bloomsbury, from him to Tom Mooney, calling one sunny day at my little newspaper, black-haired, black-browed, bursting his blue serge, arms like a gladiator's legs, deep voiced, cheerful and taking his gossipy ease. . . . I agreed with them, and furthermore I still agree with them, but not now in their words, not in any of their words. I agree with what they *feel*, with their distaste for the standardized, with their determination to escape the tiresome masses. They are free and they take their ease and know good wine from bad, and they ignore the silly bustle and noise of the industrial world. I agree with them about fire-places and wood-cuts and peasants—I think of the old, old churches of Mexico that Dos Passos loves—and traditional food and loose clothing, and leisure. But I don't agree with what they SAY, any more than they do.

For this I shall very likely be shot down right alongside of Hamilton Fish who pays them the fat compliment of thinking they mean what they say, all the evidence of their lives to the contrary notwithstanding.

Prussianism or Hitlerism

BRINCKERHOFF JACKSON

ONE of the most reliable means of judging the political state of mind of contemporary Germany is by observing her attitude toward Italy and toward Prussia. When National Socialism makes much of its affinity with Fascism then it is safe to assume that the conservative forces are in power; and when the "Prussian Heritage" is celebrated then more likely than not the radical, "anti-European" faction has the upper hand. The estrangement between Italy and Germany, although superficially a diplomatic disagreement, is in reality the result of the dominance of this left wing, which professes to despise Fascism, and whose ideal is a German Commonwealth having no similarity to the states of Western Europe. To help bring this about there has come into existence a Prussian cult, much as there was a Classical Roman cult in our early history. As in all such cults, the idol bears a striking resemblance to the worshipper. The new deified Prussia is not the Prussia of the Hohenzollerns but the Third Reich of Hitler, and that is much to be deplored. The genuine Prussia is not honoured or even recognized; but for all that, the love of what passes for Prussia and Prussianism grows and grows each day, and manifests itself in some reform in German life. An excellent example of it is to be seen in the complete extinction of that state as an entity within the Reich. By the Law of the 30th of January, 1934, it was divided into four parts, only one of which, East Prussia, remained Prussian in name. This is a somewhat singular manner of expressing affection for an institution: to deprive it of all form and individuality; but it is quite German. There is something mystic and symbolical about the act, something which is in keeping not only with the current belief in the advantage of the centralized state, but with German idealism as well. It is the death of Prussia and the birth of Prussianism.

Now it is almost impossible to understand German sentiment for Prussia, because the Germans do not understand it themselves; but what is back of it is this: Prussia has been a successful and efficient nation, and Germany has not; therefore Germany will adopt Prussianism. It cannot be denied that Prussia has indeed been successful; she has known what she wanted and has known how to get it, and has usually won out in the end; nor can it be denied that Germany has blundered with appalling consistency in all of her historical undertakings. On both accounts, then, Germany is justified in looking to Prussia for guidance; only it all depends on what aspect of Prussianism is to be emulated: the method or the aims; for Prussian method is admirable, and Prussian aims are the exact opposite.

It is not only possible to distinguish between the spiritual aims and the spiritual methods of Prussianism, but it is necessary. As an example of the distinction: the method of a football team is discipline, and initiative and co-operation, but its purpose, to put it mildly, is uninspired. This distinction is so apparent that one hesitates to make it; but it sometimes seems that business enterprises which profess loyalty to the ideals of

American Sport do not actually see it. It is the same with Germany and Prussianism; Prussian method is high-minded as few others are, but Prussian aims in foreign policy are completely selfish. Humane spirits protest against Prussianism for the same reason that they protest against football: because it is brutal. They suppose somehow that in each huddle the players say: "Men, in this next play we are going to break two legs and gouge out an eye." They suppose that in secret conclaves at Potsdam the Prussian General Staff said: "In the next war we will destroy Democracy and deny humane conventions." Whereas the brutality in both cases lies in simply not caring how many legs or ideals are smashed so long as the struggle is successful.

If Germany would only enlighten the world as to which Prussianism she has deified we would know at least what to count on: either an efficient and rational policy, or an abnormal "realistic" one; but Germany cannot enlighten us because she herself is in the dark. Prussianism according to Goebbels is Comradeship, Discipline, Honour, Courage; solid virtues all of them, and as the basis for a new social order, revolutionary in themselves; but Goebbels and his friends do not stop there; Prussianism is more than these; it is Nationalism, Race Pride, Intolerance, Provincialism, and a hatred of Liberal ideas. The western world has never been prone to take Germany at her own appraisal, but it has taken Prussianized Germany at her own appraisal. We do not believe Germany when she is sane but we not only believe her when she boasts of having sold herself to the Devil; we believe in the Devil as well; we believe in Hitler's Prussianism.

To all appearances we have lost the ability of distinguishing in Germany what is really German about the Revolution, and what is Prussian, except in so far as we bemoan the oppression of the "true" Germany by wicked Prussia. Actually Germany is never more German than when she is pretending to be Prussian. In a debate in the House of Lords last spring the anti-Semitic proceedings in the Reich were characterized as "Prussian"; this in spite of Prussia's honourable record for religious toleration—considerably older than England's—which has only recently been spoiled not by the spirit of Prussian militarism but by German Democratic Nationalism. It would be a thankless task to undertake a defence of Prussia and all her actions, and a task, moreover, that German Nationalists are only too eager to put through on their own account; but when all the extravagances of the present régime are ascribed both by the National Socialists and by Liberal Germanophobes to Prussia, and when both of these parties seem to be unaware of the merits of the real Prussianism, then it is time for a little logic to be introduced. Germany and the rest of the word can only gain by a recognition of the value of the Prussian method, and Germany is the chief loser by the grotesque misinterpretation which sees in Prussia the prime example of nationalism and bigotry and mob-rule.

II

In the first place Prussia is not, and never was, nationalistic; she never pursued a domestic or a foreign policy the end of which was to achieve ethnic or linguistic or religious unity. Prussian vanity is a well-known state of mind, but it is based on a pride of achievement, and of participation, fancied or otherwise, in that achievement. It would be unthinkable without the state and its institutions; it is completely detached from the Prussian landscape. German Nationalism, on the other hand, has lived a century without either a state or dynasty (as the embodiment of history), and intends, moreover, to dispense with both in the future, and to substitute race unity. No nation in Europe, with the possible exception of Austria, has been less influenced than Prussia by ideas of ethnological nationalism. This is not because of any virtue on Prussia's part; she would not have got very far if she had been: the original population of the territory was Slav and Wend; the Teutonic knights were themselves Saxon; the Hohenzollerns were from southern Germany; and the conquests of Frederick the Great and the acquisitions of 1814 and 1866 brought into Prussia Polish, Rhenish, and Danish blood. These elements were assimilated, but not by any melting-pot method; they became part of the state. One of the few favourable things said about pre-War Germany was in praise of its intelligent handling of minorities. These were all, except for Alsace-Lorraine, under Prussian jurisdiction, and they were left alone culturally, not because of any lofty belief in the sacredness of their individuality, but merely because it would have served no purpose for Prussia to convert them, as long as they remained obedient citizens. Again, one of the favourite pursuits of German nationalistic rhapsodists is to try to demonstrate that Frederick the Great was an Apostle of Germanism. It cannot be done; they cannot overlook Frederick's pronounced Francophile and

Germanophobe sentiments, nor his readiness to fight other German princes; they cannot dismiss the fact that the nationality of his opponents was to Frederick as irrelevant as questions of church affiliations were to the last Kaiser in the World War; and this because Frederick, though first of all a Prussian, was last of all a European, which is something National Socialists know nothing about. And if Prussia has no racial basis for Nationalism, it has still less of a geographical basis. It is no less arbitrary in its contours than Kansas is; it is simply an irregular fragment of a plain extending from the Elbe to the Ural Mountains. Nor has Prussia either confessional or economic unity: it is evenly divided between agriculture and industry, and between Catholicism and Protestantism.

Since Prussia is free from the passion for racial, geographic, or religious unity, from Nationalism of any sort, ought we not to consider her an exceptionally enlightened and modern state? For those who hold Nationalism to be the chief cause of the world's disorders the answer must be Yes. But it is in fact just this absence of Nationalism which makes Prussia the menace to world peace that she has so often been. Prussia represents the energy and power of the modern state combined with the freedom from ties of a nomad tribe, except that instead of claiming no place as home Prussia claims every place. There is a limit to nationalist racial aspirations, and geographical boundaries can, as in the case of France, be reached and respected; but an insatiable desire for power will rarely call a halt of its own will, and never for long. Prussian Nationalism is Imperialism. In the early part of 1933, when France's fears of an awakened Prussia were especially lively, French comment did not criticize so much the ambitions of Prussia as that nation's inability to moderate them. The obvious absence in the Prussian character of any sort of hesitation or considered judgement justified Prussian autocracy as a form of government, and by the same token justified the outside world in imposing for self-defence the check upon Prussian policies which was not imposed from within. That this argument was intended to sanction a preventative war does not invalidate its truth.

In spite of this expansiveness in Prussian policy the method back of it is discipline. Prussianism is not a volcanic and spontaneous outburst of national energy like that of Germany in 1914; it is the result of reason and system, and when the Third Reich compares its violent career to a manifestation of Prussianism it could hardly be more in error; between a popular emotional upheaval and the calculating determination of Hohenzollern Prussia there is very little in common. Spengler, who is the leading critic of Prussianism, analyzes that spirit in *Preussentum und Sozialismus*, contrasting it with modern German ideals. Prussianism as it existed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was aristocratic and imperialistic. To be Prussian did not necessarily mean being an inhabitant of the country, or even of Prussian descent; it meant being a conscientious and energetic member of the community, one willing to work for the aims of the state. "Each keeps his own place," says Spengler, "some command, others obey. This has been authoritarian socialism since the eighteenth century, and is by its nature un-liberal and anti-democratic."

Now Prussia with all her faults in the conduct of foreign relations never supposed for herself a moral mission, as the French Revolution supposed for itself a moral mission, and as the New Germany supposes for herself a moral mission; Prussia's policies were strictly selfish and irresponsible toward the world at large, but her methods, just the same, were characterized by a fanatical sense of duty and of individual responsibility. Prussia made no pretense of moral perfection, but she achieved moral efficiency. This is simply another way of denying Democracy, but it is likewise a denial of racial and religious fanaticism. Anyone, irrespective of background, who shows the necessary devotion to the order is a member of the order. Thus the soldier and the official are the highest types of the Prussian spirit because they are both of them part of an hierarchical and strictly formal organization. Democracy, whether German or American, demands that the public official and the soldier be devoted to the ideals of Democracy just as it demands that the salesman be devoted to the ideals of "Service"; Prussianism, however, simply demands devotion to authority and discipline. The voice of God is not that of the people, but that of the drill-master.

In brief, Prussianism is aristocratic and exclusive in form, disciplined and not inspired in action, and unnational in outlook. Who would think of applying that description to modern Germany? Certainly not Hitler. It would be more appropriate to the Jesuits than to the National Socialists. No doubt the parallel between Prussia and the Society of Jesus is valid only within definite limits: but both institutions are based on legitimate authority, and are committed to the hierarchical principle; both do their best to steer a middle course between individualism and collectivism by recognizing property only as a trust to be used for social ends, and by emphasizing individual responsibility; both exhibit unrivalled powers of organization, and with both discipline is not only practical but educational as well. The reason for this similarity is that both Prussia and the Society are the creation of the Post-Renaissance and share the characteristics of that period; for Prussia is essentially a Classical product, and not a Gothic one; the influence of the mediaeval Knights of the Teutonic Order upon Potsdam is largely a fancy of Spengler's; indeed, the whole of Prussian history before the seventeenth century is more Polish than German. Prussia has always preserved, in however degenerate a form, the cosmopolitan and sceptical temper of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; while the rest of Germany was in the throes of Romanticism, Berlin was still a center of Rationalism. One cannot say that Prussia represents the best of the old tradition, but it represents as no other country does its political ideals. Compared to what France and England and America have inherited from the classical culture this is a pitiful remnant; but it is to this fraction that Prussia owes her indifference to Nationalism and race, her tolerance in certain matters as well as her ridiculous tyranny in others, and above all her maintenance of a certain European feeling in spite of temperamental limitations. Prussianism was never creative in the best of times; it never had a faith or a cause; but it did know how to act with intelligence, and it avoided, along with the virtues, the excesses of enthusiasm.

If the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the heyday of Prussianism, the nineteenth century was the period of anti-Prussianism. It was also the period of the birth of German Nationalism, and these two movements are not to be separated. Nationalism was in Germany a spirit which arose spontaneously from the people, though influenced in its manifestation by foreign events and ideas. Compounded of a highly inaccurate but none the less stimulating estimate of Germany's historical rôle, and of a fervent love for the Democratic principles of the French Revolution, it had a character all its own: vague, transcendental, unable to cope with the existing order, and consequently irresponsible. No one can tell, for instance, whether Fichte was a somewhat unbalanced patriot, or a sincere lover of humanity and universal peace; for if he was the god-son of Rousseau, he was also the god-father of Hitler. Hitler's movement is not more Nationalistic than it is Democratic, Democratic in the sense of being all-inclusive and popular. The tragedy of German Democracy is that it has never been able to express itself politically as it did in France and America and in Italy. Had a German Republic been set up in 1848 there would have been no Hitler; not because it would have opposed his ideals but because it would have anticipated them. German Democratic ambitions saw the pseudo-classic forms that French and American Democracy assumed, but could not follow suit, and when at last in 1933 German Democracy came into its own the constitutional forms had lost their lure; so that it adopted, for lack of anything else, a half-proletarian, half-feudal garb, thereby effectively frightening off its friends.

The cause of this frustration of Germany's Democratic instincts does not lie in the accidents of German history, but in the character of the Germans. For Germany cannot express herself, no matter how hard she tries. She either makes a fetish of the forms of expression, or else denies them completely; she is either intensely idealistic or intensely materialistic, but never is she the mistress of the forms. This trait offers perhaps some clue to the German hostility to the Jews, who as a race are materialistic and are also past masters of expression: bankers and "intellectuals". Thomas Mann calls the Latin civilization of Western Europe the political and literary tradition, to distinguish it from the German, which is neither. This may or may not be a mark of superiority, but certainly it is a regrettable fact that German Democracy and Nationalism has never expressed itself competently. It must either ignore the state or deify it; it seems utterly incapable of using it as the western world has used it; it either abuses Prussianism in its correct sense or else glorifies it in an incorrect sense. But in spite of being so desperately inarticulate Germany remains Democratic, even now. Liberal critics of Western Europe condemn National Socialism for its destruction of those institutions which we have come to associate with Democracy: a free press, a representative government, and the traditional paraphernalia of popular expression. But this is perhaps Hitler's inept way of paying homage to Democracy, and another proof of Germany's dislike of the means of expression. Admitted that Hitler's Democracy is not what Democracy should be; it bears, nevertheless, a startling resemblance to what Democracy is: the tyranny of popular ignorance, of popular heroes, and a general lowering of the cultural level to suit the capacities of the Common Man. Is it not in reality American conservatism and respect for forms that protests against National Socialism, rather than our outraged Democratic sensibilities?

III

A genuine Democrat distrusts the power of the state, just as Jefferson did; and the first thing that German Democracy did was to condemn Prussia—not on Liberal grounds, but because Prussia separated the state from the people as a whole; because private and public life remained separate spheres of activity; and there existed in Prussia a dualism. The ideal of the totalitarian state was enunciated over a century ago, and what it amounts to is nothing less than the suppression of this dualism between state and people. The ideal of the one-ness between state and people is the motive for a good deal of Liberal legislation; the referendum and the recall are simply two very mild examples of it. Thus, the Liberal and Democratic Utopia is Germany, where the common boast is that "People and State are One". The Third Reich is a commonwealth that has relinquished all authority to the people—or to their self-appointed delegates; it makes no difference which, for the Nazi rulers think in terms of the people. Germany—is it necessary to say?—is at the mercy of mass emotionalism. That is what the early denial of Prussia has amounted to, let Goebbels and Hitler protest as they will their devotion to the Nation of Frederick the Great.

Now the worst of German Nationalism is that it is in no way capable of disciplining itself, once it has achieved Democracy. There are Nationalisms and Nationalisms, and German Nationalism has many splendid virtues, but those of self-expression and order are not among them. One can trust Latin Nationalism to manifest itself at once in an orderly state. Fascism, for example, contains a certain Classic element which may be bogus but which at least makes for self-control. German Nationalism is in this respect hopeless. French Nationalism contents itself with an orgy of constitutions; German Nationalism spends itself in lyrical ecstasy. Moreover, it manifests a very disturbing tendency to break with every European tradition, upon which for better or for worse our civilization is founded. The swastika is well chosen: it is not a classic emblem like the fasces; it is not heraldic-traditional like the cross; it is not even materialistic and cheap in meaning like the sickle and hammer: it is simply barbaric, in the strictest sense of the word. Like the new German race theory it is a relic of prehistory. The toying with Wagnerian mythology and the sullen hostility to Christianity, to say nothing of the hatred of "Liberalism" and individualism, and above all the contempt for everything aristocratic in the real meaning cannot be dignified by the name of German culture; it is German anti-culture.

Disheartening though it is to have to realize that the German character could bring forth such a monster, some comfort is to be derived from the thought that this wholesale denunciation is testimony of a deeply felt desire to arrive at more solid values. The destruction of the state, and of all artificial social organizations whether of class or occupation, is Germany's attempt to tear away the veil that conceals the "real" social order. Just as to Germans music is the purest of the arts because it is the least material, so the best society is that in which the underlying spirit is the least obscured and interpreted by institutions. Everything in Germany is at present made to conform to this Idealism; the best literature is the one in which there is the least "art", and the one in which the message is most apparent; the best painting is the least abstract and has the most meaning; the best science and law are those least objective and the most ready to propagate German Ideas. This impatience in the Third Reich to get at "reality", and the consequent underestimation of the value of expression and form, seems to know no limit. Art for Art's sake is of course nonsense, but thought is refined by expression; it does not matter whether the expression happens to be a sonnet or a political system. We have no right to deny Germany the privilege of searching for the "real" society, but we have the right to ask that she express herself in a lucid manner.

One is forced to admit that this thirst for the hidden meaning of things is not only essentially National-Socialist but is also essentially German; yet there are traits in the German character which are creative only when they are individual, which are not suited for collective practice. A certain love of innocence and freshness and a reverence for laws that are more than temporal inspires in the individual German his almost lyrical feeling for Nature. But that a society motivated by these two sentiments can create chaos is painfully apparent; they are distorted and they become an unintelligent hatred of artificiality and convention, and too great a reliance on the physical; along with a kind of transcendental fanaticism. If one German in a forest is a poet, a whole nation of Germans in the forest worshipping Nature presents to the average imagination a very definite picture: that of a nation of Barbarians. German Nationalism, no matter how intense a sentiment it may be, tends to frustrate itself.

Perhaps the new German respect for Prussianism is a tacit admission of the inadequacy of Germanism. But the spell is not yet broken, and National Socialists cannot forswear an intoxicating Prussianism of Gothic *Sturm-und-Drang*, Steel-Willed Supermen, and a sort of hard-bitten, lower-class Socialism. A recent book entitled *Die Botschaft des Ostens* praises the imaginary revolutionary qualities of Prussianism more than any other feature. It takes as its thesis that Italian Fascism is destined to be Germany's most bitter adversary, because it, Fascism, represents the last stand of capitalism, and is typically Western in its sympathy with the Church and its defence of private property. But the Prussian He-man, the peasant and the soldier, are anti-individualistic, anti-capitalistic, and anti-clerical, and are therefore the allies of Soviet Russia in its anti-Western tendencies. The book ends on a note of admiration for "Prussianism, the original form of National Socialism". One cannot but feel that Moscow would despise this countrified Marxism, which is typical, nevertheless, not only of the anti-Italian tone of the left-wing National Socialism, but of scores of appreciations of Prussianism, and a hint of what Goebbels and Goering and Rosenberg would like to see evolve.

Strangely enough it is the right wing of the party which has the most concrete notion of what Prussianism is. Hugenberg's party—the late, though not lamented, German Nationalist Party—had a spokesman of no little authority in the world at large: Spengler; and it is he who has attempted to correct Hitler's conception of the Teutonic spirit. He falls, nevertheless, into the same error; that of thinking that Prussianism has a moral mission. If it is false to believe that Prussianism justifies cultural anarchy and social collectivism, it is in a much deeper sense false to believe that it justifies Imperialism and a cynical contempt for German ideals. What Spengler's motives were in writing *Preussentum und Sozialismus* is beside the point, but the work in fact is a call for a Fascism of Big Business and a justification of rapacity, and little else. While Spengler reviles Liberalism for being impractical and too idealistic, it is the bright side of National-Socialist exuberance that it denies Liberalism for not being idealistic enough. Both schools see in Prussianism the effective denial of Liberalism, but there the similarity ends.

IV

Every speech by Hitler and his henchmen denies Western Liberalism with all possible violence; but every act of theirs denies Prussianism. No matter how often and how eloquently the Third Reich does lip-service to the Prussian Tradition it never manifests the slightest notion of its real character. The glorified Prussian soldier and official are not to be separated from the social order which created them, and until this is realized Hitler's Prussianism can only mean a sentimental and uncomprehending regard for a disciplined and ordered society, which he has no intentions of reconstructing. What is the good of making pious pilgrimages to Potsdam and Koenigsberg, of restoring Prussian symbols and rank? Far better to revive Prussian methods in the civil service and in the Foreign Office, and to keep Prussian Militarism military and not popular. And there is in present-day Germany the basis for a healthy and immensely productive dualism between Prussia and National Socialism, provided the latter does not "co-ordinate" the former. Nationalism is the best antidote for a voracious Imperialism just as a cautious and calculating diplomacy is the best sort of restraint upon a rampant and tactless Race Idealism. But no purpose is served by ignoring this opposition. What Germany must grasp is this: Prussianism is not a message; it is a language, a highly grammatical and flexible language capable of expressing any political idea.

This, then, is the true rôle of Prussianism: to give to Germany a language for her to express her beliefs. It is, briefly, to give to Germany an objective and sceptical government, and a coherent foreign policy. It is to restore the dualism in German life and to restore, consequently, authority in every field. Revolutions may come from the people, but a National culture from the people is parochial and obscurantist. The new Russian Nationalism is the creation of the state; and if Germany intends to rival its accomplishments, it will do well to imitate the method, and to cease the persecution of anything from a school of painting to a theory of foreign policy which the layman does not understand. Prussia has ever been sceptical of Democratic judgement, as the western world has reason to know, and now is the time that this scepticism can stand Germany in good stead. A little lack of enthusiasm in the relentless fulfilment of social and cultural theories would do wonders, and would not dampen Germany's ardour. Carlyle's "Good Silent Germany" is a nineteenth-century figure, without much appeal to the twentieth. We want to know what Germany has to say; we cannot forever condemn the Third Reich without a hearing. Humanitarian criticism seems totally unaware of the immensity of Germany's undertaking, and sometimes one cannot but feel that Germany herself is in the dark: that like the western world she imagines that her Revolution is purely economic and social. But new concepts of work and reward, of man's relation to other men and to the world around him, are only incidentally the elements of economic and social theory; they are finally the elements of art and philosophy and religion. They are struggling now in Germany to acquire form, and Germany will remain in anarchy until the medium is found. It is possible that German blindness will make her pass this chance by; if it does–then, and not before, will be the time to talk about reaction and disillusionment.

Three Leaders of Conservatism

Guizot, Metternich, Nicholas I

LEONID I. STRAKHOVSKY

THE so-called liberal tradition of the nineteenth century, inherited by the men of the early twentieth and kept alive by the moderate socialists of our own times, has led many a youth astray and has created generations of cynics, iconoclasts, and anarchists. This tradition has to its credit more distortion of history than all the semi-literate mediaeval scribes or the early annalists and recorders of the classic world. Ignorance can be pleaded as an attenuating circumstance in the case of the earlier periods. Liberalism deliberately proceeded on its chosen and dangerous path, moved by a single consideration—that of defending its thesis. It felt itself excused *a priori* because of the moral value of the thesis, because of its "humanitarian" outlook, even claiming that it followed ostensibly the precepts of the greatest of teachers—Christ. And yet its results were and are disastrous, mainly because it has dealt with theories and neglected to observe life or to understand human nature. It proclaimed the sanctity of revolution, ignoring the fact that revolutions bring misery in their wake and often surpass in their blind injustice the state of injustice which preceded them. It announced as its superior aim the seeking of truth, not a metaphysical truth, but a very earthly one, manifested by a state of happiness. In pursuance of this aim it unchained human passions and plunged the world into political and social conflicts, piling up the greatest hecatomb the world has known. And finally, misunderstanding and misinterpreting Christianity, it originated a formidable wave of atheism and agnosticism.

In itself the radical outlook which lies at the basis of the liberal tradition is not negative. It springs from a fine instinct, common to all men—the desire for betterment. It is generous in its perception that the world is full of cruelty and injustice, but that it may and can be bettered. When a radical sees anything which appears to him wrong or imperfect, he wishes to destroy it, though often without a thought of how it came to be or of what he can substitute in its place. But once this radical instinct has been given free play in its work of destruction, the world is subjected to a never-ending cataclysm, for no sooner has it replaced one structure by another than it comes to realize the imperfections of the latter and seeks to destroy that also. Thus it becomes the most dangerous force in humanity. Beginning with a generous purpose, it ends with destruction of good and evil institutions alike, often creating a new state of things more evil than that which was destroyed; whereupon it has to set forth once more on its quest for a non-existent earthly truth and to destroy the social and political peace of the world in the name of social justice. "I will not", wrote Burke, "enter into the question how much truth is preferable to peace. Perhaps truth may be far better. But as we have scarcely ever the same certainty in the one that we have in the other, I would, unless the truth were evident indeed, hold fast to peace."

Opposing and conflicting with the radical instinct is the spirit of conservatism. In the changing world of today, with its constant revaluation of values, its "bloodless" revolutions and terroristic despotisms, it seems timely to examine the old term, "conservatism", and to consider its true meaning. Too often has conservatism been identified with reaction, whereas in the light of history undistorted by the liberal tradition we perceive more reactionary excesses on the part of radicals and liberals than on the part of conservatives. It all comes down to the question: How many human lives were sacrificed for the attainment of the aim, and did the sacrifice prove to be worth it?

The common definition of conservatism is "the disposition and tendency to preserve what is established; opposition to change" (Webster). Lord Hugh Cecil, in his book entitled *Conservatism*, writes:

> Conservatism is a tendency of the human mind. It is a disposition averse from change; and it springs partly from a distrust of the unknown and a corresponding reliance on experience rather than on theoretic reasoning; partly from a faculty in men to adapt themselves to their surroundings so that what is familiar merely because of its familiarity becomes more acceptable or more tolerable than what is unfamiliar. Distrust of the unknown, and preference for experience over theory, are deeply seated in almost all minds. . . . Novelties, at the first sight, are regarded as new-fangled and either futile or dangerous by the great majority of men. They frighten and irritate, they fatigue and perplex those who for the first time seek to understand them.

And Arthur Bryant, in a more recent book entitled *The Spirit of Conservatism*, says:

> The instincts which underlie conservatism are very simple. Men love the familiar: they distrust and fear

change. Yet they live in a world where change is inevitable. There is therefore in their hearts a constant protest against an existence in which all they hold dear is for ever being hurried from them down the stream of time. This protest finds an echo in their actions. From the beginning of recorded history, men have endeavoured to reconcile change with the dictates of their nature and to make a permanent habitation for themselves in a transitory world. The enduring home, of which mortality robs them, they leave to their children and their children's children. This home is the State and the ordered civilization, whose benefits we in our generation inherit.

Thus conservatism, generally speaking, has been identified primarily with aversion to change. Indeed, at the beginning of Western civilization, at the beginning of the history of any early state or nation, everyone was a conservative, because the perils of anarchy, out of which the state or nation had emerged, were never far enough away to be forgotten. But the modern concentration of population in towns, and the ease with which ideas can be spread, have made men readier to accept new theories of government than to rely on the accumulated experience of the past. The daily dissemination of a mass of unreliable information through the press helps to give modern man a false sense of omniscience. He is told of so many events that he is inclined to think he must know everything and to despise the teaching of the past. He lets life pass by him without noticing it. He forgets that life is continuous. He is ready to perform the most dangerous operations on the body of life, with the same *insouciance* as a child opening the belly of a doll to see what is in it. But where the operation performed by the child can only deprive him of a toy and make him suffer a correctional spanking, the operations of modern man have far-reaching results: almost inevitably they cripple not only him but a whole generation to come.

Since the revolutionary thunder of the late eighteenth century shook two continents, we see modern man performing these dangerous operations over and over again, neglecting to study the past, oblivious of the present, only attempting to realize a theoretically beautiful future. In his false certitude of omniscience he challenges all authority and all wisdom, thus transforming our supposedly enlightened era into an age of utter unintelligence. The predominant factor in the process of bringing about this calamity is modern man's lack of responsibility, a direct consequence of modern democracy. Modern man must be educated, even past his opposition, to be a useful and responsible link in the endless chain of life, to insure that the best of our civilization shall endure.

Thus the conservative is called upon to perform a double rôle: to preserve and to adapt: to preserve the institutions which have proved to be stable through experience, and to adapt those institutions through a gradual process of reform to the fundamental changes in life brought about by modern progress. The motto of the radical is "revolution", motivated by an insatiable and mostly unreasonable desire for change; that of the conservative is and must be "evolution", based on precepts of stability and security.

Disregarding entirely this constructive element in conservatism, the liberal tradition has branded as reactionaries a number of historical figures whose main "fault" was a relentless resistance to revolutionary demagogy and mob rule. Among these perhaps the most maligned of the entire nineteenth century are Guizot, Metternich, and Nicholas I of Russia. For their ideas and their actions are a marked proof to the contrary.

Although contemporaries, the Frenchman Guizot, the German Metternich, and the Russian Nicholas I belonged, historically speaking, to different ages; their respective countries were in vastly different stages of development and the characters of their people thoroughly divergent. Moreover, their religious affiliations created still further differences: Guizot was a Protestant, Metternich a Roman Catholic, and Nicholas I a Greek Orthodox. Yet much of their ideology was built on common ground, motivated by similar considerations: they were all three essentially and naturally conservative.

II

François Pierre Guillaume Guizot (1787-1874) was born in Normandy of Huguenot parents, proud of their minority religion in an overwhelmingly Catholic France. By birth he belonged to the intellectuals of the middle class, but at the end of his life he expressed regret that he had not belonged or had not been elevated to the peerage. As a boy of seven he migrated with his mother to Geneva, that Protestant intellectual haven, permeated with Rousseau's earthly idealism, after his father had been guillotined. His early upbringing was entirely the work of his mother and of Swiss matter-of-factness. In 1805, he returned to France to study law in Paris and to try out his luck as a publicist and writer on current events. Seven years later, he obtained an appointment to the chair of modern history at the Sorbonne, mainly in recognition of his brilliant translation of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* For some years thereafter he busied himself almost entirely with his lectures and writing, having only twice occupied minor governmental posts during the reign of Louis XVIII. It was not until the advent of Charles X that he took a stand in the opposition. Having become the leader of the *Doctrinaires*, a moderate royalist group, he sought election to the Chamber of Deputies. He obtained his seat in January 1830, from Lisieux, a seat he was to keep during his entire political career. He opposed the July ordinances with such vigour that he was asked to participate in the Government of the July Monarchy on account of his liberalism. However, he kept his ministerial post but a few months, because of his rapidly growing conservatism. During the following ten years he remained merely a deputy, continuing to write on public affairs with ever growing sharpness and bitterness. Finally, on October 29, 1840, after a brief sojourn as French ambassador to the Court of St. James's, he was asked by Louis Philippe to form his first ministry, in which he took the portfolio of foreign affairs, to keep it until the fall of the July monarchy. All through his life, before 1848 as well as after, Guizot continued to use his pen as his main weapon and principal medium of expression. His oratory was far from brilliant. His speeches in the Chamber of Deputies were always terse, matter-of-fact; and this, added to his haughty attitude, made him a much better defender of a policy than leader of a bellicose opposition. But in his writings he was different. The elegance of his style and his forcefulness of expression were unequalled by any other political writer of his time. It is in the writings which he has left us that we find the greatest wealth of information about the man.*

Guizot's basic political ideas rested upon a conception of duty rather than right. Duty to God, to the state, to the King. He advocated that "society should rest on the idea of duty and tend constantly to rest on that idea alone". He claimed that

> political rights are not personal; he who exercises them takes decisions which do not concern only himself, but which concern society or a portion of society. . . . Hence political rights are not equal for all. . . . In every time and place conditions and guarantees have been attached to political rights as proof or presumption of the capacity necessary for their exercise in the interests of society; which is the sphere of their operation. To speak of equality in connection with political rights is . . . to confuse individual and social existence, the civil and the political order, liberty and government.

Guizot firmly believed that government, like theology, must be left to the experts. He was thoroughly opposed to the principle of universal suffrage, reasoning that although it was a right, which some claimed to be a basic political right of all members of modern society, the exercise of this or any other right without the basic conception of duty would result in a total sense of irresponsibility, dangerous to organized society, leading directly to political anarchy. He knew that reasons of morality and practical sense could do little enough towards keeping the passions of men within the limits of right. He knew (and pointed to the utopian socialists as an example) how easily men of high intelligence could be deluded by the slightest element of truth into accepting the most monstrous errors. He knew that there might seem to the casual observer to be no improvement in political life or in the relations between states; he relied not on the brilliant, quick-satisfying, and perishable measures put through under the impulse of momentary passion, but on the permanent, the durable, projecting into the future, the bridge of continuity from today into tomorrow. Guizot certainly had that sense of the future which is a sure sign of political greatness: "I abhor what is easily forgotten, what passes quickly: I like nothing but what has an air of permanence and long memory."

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* The most important of Guizot's works are: *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps,* 8 vols., Paris, 1858-1861; *Histoire parlementaire de la France,* 5 vols., Paris, 1863-1864.

Guizot's delight in long-sighted views led him to connect the details of his foreign policy with general principles. He was not satisfied unless he could feel that the tide of the time was with him; that he was acting in accordance with the needs of modern civilization as well as serving the particular needs of France. "We are set", he wrote, "in the midst of two conflicting currents; one of them is deep and regular, and draws us toward the rightful end of our social organization; the other is troubled and superficial, and drives us hither and thither in a search for new adventures and uncharted lands." Guizot was determined to follow the former and to combat the latter.

His fundamental adherence to things permanent naturally made of him a convinced monarchist. Far from shutting his eyes to the danger that the monarchistic principle may represent in the case of an unworthy or weak sovereign, Guizot saw in royalty the only political institution which could assure the achievement of permanence. "The particular business of royalty is to represent in the government the principle of action and the principle of stability; the crown is the executive power, the power that is always in being." But Guizot's monarchism was not theoretical. He believed firmly that France needed a king. That is why he was a monarchist. Yet he understood very well that other nations may have political institutions which, corresponding more closely to their national temperament, would be to them more beneficial than a constitutional monarchy of the French type. By reversing the argument he was naturally led to oppose revolutionary propaganda. Much as he admired the achievements of the revolution of 1789, he did not believe that these achievements were a matter for exportation. He exclaimed: "This preposterous idea to submit Europe to the principle of unity, to place her under one and the same system, to make her be governed by the laws of a single idea!" But he believed firmly and proudly in the ultimate, the cosmic rightness of his first principles. He relied on experience to justify them, "experience, which is the suffrage of centuries".

In concluding this sketch of Guizot's political ideology, it is relevant to take some account of Guizot's Protestantism. Like Bismarck, he failed to see that the close and continual co-operation of every element in society can alone lead to the attainment of the good life. He lacked the feeling for a commonwealth wherein inequality of condition was no barrier to the positive contribution of all citizens to a common cause. Although he spoke always of the French nation, he thought, like Metternich, in terms of the French state. He never attained to the Catholic conception of the Church. As a Christian he knew the value of a high standard of personal conduct and charity; his association with Protestant organizations had been one of the most important elements of his inner life. Yet he was not free from that spiritual pride which saw liberty only in individual action, and religion only in the right development of personal holiness. He would not understand the solidarity of human life, the common responsibility of men for the common weaknesses of men; the greater corporate responsibility of the strong for the failures of the weak. There is no doubt that Guizot was strong himself; that his strength was in his own will, in his idea of an ordered, civilized liberty, in his personal uprightness and charity, his indomitable pride and his courage. His greatness as a statesman reposes entirely on these qualities; but he did not realize that they had to be matched in his contemporaries before his ideas could materialize, or his labours be rewarded with the rich harvest so well deserved, yet unobtained.

When the fall of the July Monarchy sent Guizot into exile, and he saw the destruction of all that he had patiently built during eight years, the deposed minister was not embittered. His personal strength and his pride helped him to drain the bitter cup. Only once did he indicate into what state of internal suffering these events had plunged him. When writing, in a study on George Washington, of the First President's retirement from politics, Guizot employed terms which evidently referred to his own experience:

> Power is heavy to bear and humanity hard to serve against its passions and errors. Not even success effaces the sad impressions which the struggle engendered, and the fatigue contracted in this arena continues to be felt amidst conditions of rest.

III

Quite different was Metternich's reaction after that flight from Vienna in the middle of a night in 1848, but he cannot be judged by the expressions of rage and contempt which he loosed once the shores of hospitable England were reached. Nor can he be judged by the circumstances of his fall. He foresaw this fall as few men have foreseen their own destruction. He knew the weakness of the Austrian government and of the civil service, the reigning house and the army. He understood the dangers of a situation which he judged beyond his power of control. Stronger men would not have been content, perhaps, with this fatalism. Yet it is difficult to refute his claim that if he had not been willing to take most things as he found them, the catastrophe would have come sooner. Europe has since judged Metternich's actions, and judged also the historians, like Treitschke, who condemned him out of hand.*

Clemens Wenzel Lothar Prince Metternich-Winneburg (1773-1859) was born in Coblenz, in the territories of the Archbishop-Elector of Trier. At the time of his birth, his father, Count Metternich, scion of an old Rhenish Catholic noble family, was Austrian Ambassador to the courts of the three Rhenish electors. Before passing into the service of the Hapsburg-Lorraines, Count Metternich had long been in the diplomatic service of the Archbishop-Elector of Mainz. Thus Prince Metternich was Austrian only by adoption. In 1788, he began his studies at the University of Strassburg, but was driven out after two years by the outbreak of the French Revolution. The revolutionary excesses which threw the peaceful old town into turmoil made a lasting impression on young Metternich. He was never to forget them. In the following years he continued his studies intermittently at the University of Mainz, but never with much diligence. In 1795 he married, in Vienna, Countess Eleanore von Kaunitz, daughter of the famous Austrian statesman. This alliance assured him success and a brilliant career. In 1801, he was sent as Austrian envoy to the court of the Elector of Saxony. In 1803, he was Ambassador at Berlin. In 1806, his appointment as Ambassador to Russia was changed to that of Ambassador to France upon a special request communicated by Napoleon to the Viennese Government. On October 8, 1809, Metternich was appointed Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, a post he was to hold for forty years. After the battle of Leipzig, on October 20, 1813, he was created hereditary prince of the Austrian Empire. Thereafter Prince Metternich was to be identified not only with a policy, with a system, but with Europe at large.

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* The principal source for the study of Metternich's ideas is his *Mémoires, documents et écrits,* published by his son Richard in 8 vols., Paris, 1881-1886.

Like Guizot, Metternich had a sense of the future, although his reactions to the present were tinted as Guizot's never were, with a great deal of cynicism. He wrote to Guizot in 1827:

> I belong to the class of men who live more in the future than in the present. My mind has an historical tendency which makes me pass over a multitude of temporary difficulties. . . . I do not despise the present. . . . I value it at what it is worth, though it is not worth much.

And in his *Mémoires* he comments further on his attitude:

I have had the misfortune to belong to the revolutionary epoch. This age will pass like all other human follies. Happy those who will have learned to keep themselves upright amid the ruin of several generations. . . . Fate has laid in part upon me the duty of restraining, as far as my powers will allow, a generation whose destiny seems to be that of losing itself upon the slope which will surely lead it to its ruin. Our society is on the downward slope. Nothing in the moral or physical world comes to a standstill. Society had reached its zenith; under these conditions a further *advance* was bound to mean a *decline*. Disease also reaches its climax, and then declines. Evolution of this kind seems exceedingly slow to contemporaries; but what are two or three centuries in the annals of history?

Like Guizot, Metternich sought permanence and stability, although he never had Guizot's faith in the possibility of achieving them in those troubled times. He believed firmly in the institution of monarchy and he advocated that the principle of stability should be announced to the world as the device of monarchy. He explained, however, that stability does not imply immobility; but improvement must come from above, and from constituted authority; wise reform can be defined as the "progressive development of institutions accomplished by legal methods". Yet in defending the monarchical principle, he was far from approving despotism, which he disliked as the sign of incapacity.

Like his French colleague, Metternich also believed in a limited acceptance of the term "equality": "Men are equal only before God and the law; there is no equality apart from this." The revolutionary claim for universal absolute equality he dismissed with one word: presumption. He agreed with the Aristotelian view that the universal and chief cause of revolutionary feeling is the desire of equality, when men think they are equal to others who have more than themselves; or, again, the desire of inequality and superiority, when conceiving themselves to be superior they think that they have not more but the same or less than their inferiors.

Metternich fought against revolution and revolutionary principles, never forgetting how in the streets of Strassburg a peaceful population had been led to violence and bloodshed by a few determined demagogues. He believed that the ordinary man wanted above all things to be sure of the morrow, wanted security for the fruits of his work, for his family, for his property. And Metternich was determined to give the ordinary man all the protection that an organized state could give. He believed that "the duty of statesmen is to *govern*", and set himself to do his duty. Again and again he was accused of using the old-fashioned means of coercion and punishment for revolutionary activity, whereas he should have set an example or used means of persuasion. Also he was accused of retaining in a changing world the same unchanging principles. He then argued that if the principles of the revolution remained the same, why should the principles of the counter-revolution alter? One cannot deny the logic of his argument.

Metternich's famous "principles" were essentially conservative: that is, his view of society took into account the unchanging nature of man. ("The French Revolution did not make men nobler.") It was based upon history and could be tested by history. Metternich successfully contrasted these principles with the merely emotional or doctrinaire generalizations of his adversaries. Maintaining that the character of the age was and would long remain one of transition, Metternich felt that humanity could be guided and preserved from further turmoil only by conservative principles. "The principles of conservatism", he wrote, "apply to the most diverse situations; their application is not confined within narrow limits; these principles are the enemies of anarchy, moral and material." And then he made a startling announcement: "I call myself a socialist-conservative."

Indeed, he was a socialist of a sort if we take into consideration his unflinching belief in the supremacy of the state and his constant sacrifice of individual interests to those of the state. But he was also a conservative, and in this double capacity he was most vehement in his accusation of those who were standing between rulers and their subjects, "breaking the sceptres of kings, usurping the voices of the peoples", anxious to justify their covetousness by attacking "all the work of the centuries which has achieved a title to the respect and allegiance of human beings". These were the liberals, the "go-betweens". In 1832, Metternich wrote to Wittgenstein: "No one with eyes, ears, and sense today can doubt any longer what liberalism is aiming at, what it is, and whither it is bound to lead states which surrender to it. Before such proofs doctrine must be silent." And in a letter to Wrede of the same year he continued: "Liberalism is but the accomplice of demagogy, and serves, very often unconsciously, to drive a road for it and often to level it most conveniently. Liberalism shares the fate of all forerunners. Once the true lord appears it is almost impossible to find any traces of the forerunner." And what is demagogy? "It is categorical, tyrannical, in its ends as in its choice of means. All means are good enough; *ôte-toi que je m'y mette* is its true symbol, and it knows how to keep true to this end. For thousands of years its motto has been that the end justifies the means; the end is no other than this saying I have quoted."

Throughout his long political career Metternich never shut his eyes to reality. He had an uncanny way of discerning, among the multiplicity of things and events, those that were lasting. When the first railway-engine was built, Thiers, the much praised French statesman, thought that the locomotive would be a new toy for the Parisians; Wellington feared that railways would be a danger to the security of England; the King of Prussia believed that no gentleman would ever travel in a steam-drawn train. Yet Metternich saw at once that railways were "one of those innovations which arise suddenly in the course of years and modify profoundly the existence of society".

Such were the ideas, reactions, and philosophical outlook of this remarkable statesman, who cannot be denied greatness even by the most biased of critics. He realized the tremendous responsibility which rested on his shoulders and the far-reaching ramifications of his every act. "Every mistake which I make affects nearly thirty million human beings", he wrote in one of his letters and added: "I am afraid only of mistakes, because I can be sure of my intentions." From the mouth of anyone but Metternich such words would have sounded presumptuous, yet they make one ponder the attitude of many who call themselves statesmen, but who are not sure of anything, least of all their own intentions. Therefore it is a great satisfaction to find this sureness of intention in the third figure to be discussed in this essay—Emperor Nicholas I of Russia.

IV

Born five months before the death of the great Catherine, the third son of Paul I and Marie, Princess of Württemberg, Nicholas (1796-1855) did not at first seem destined to ascend the Romanov throne. Consequently his education was far from adequate to prepare him for the position to which he was actually called in later years. Notwithstanding all the brave attempts of his mother to direct his studies into more humanistic channels, Nicholas developed an early taste for all things military and persisted in that interest alone. This inclination was the principal factor in moulding his political philosophy. His education actually ended in 1815, when he was betrothed to Princess Charlotte of Prussia, whom he married two years later. From 1817, Nicholas led the typical life of a Grand Duke, commanding a brigade and later a division of the Guards. Although in 1819 his brother, Emperor Alexander I, had revealed to him in a casual conversation that Constantine, the heir apparent (as Alexander was childless), had renounced his rights to the throne, thus making Nicholas the legitimate successor, nothing was changed in the latter's life (he was not even appointed a member of the Imperial Council) and no further indications were made either by Emperor Alexander or anybody else as to the heavy task which was to fall to Nicholas upon the death of his brother, the Emperor, in 1825. He ascended the throne of Russia in December of that year after quelling a revolt organized by Russian noblemen, mostly officers in the Guards or the army and navy. Thereafter for thirty years Emperor Nicholas protected Russia from revolution and turmoil, assuring her internal peace, although he was unable to keep her out of foreign wars.*

Like Guizot and Metternich, Emperor Nicholas I had a profound sense of duty—the most marked quality which the three men possessed in common. As a child, writing a composition for his French professor, Nicholas stated:

> King Louis XVI did not do his duty and was punished thereby. To be weak does not mean to be clement; a sovereign has no right to pardon enemies of the state. Louis XVI faced a real conspiracy, disguised by the false name of liberty; he would have spared much misery to his people by not sparing the conspirators.

This sense of duty, inculcated in him from childhood and vivified by his military inclinations, led Nicholas to form his own conception of a useful life:

> I conceive all human life as a form of service in the sense of fulfilling unflinchingly one's duty; it is necessary to learn stern obedience, before one is called to command; and if everyone in the world would conscientiously perform the service which falls to him, order and peace would reign everywhere.

And many years later, when admonishing a young nobleman, he repeated:

> We must all serve; I serve myself and not for myself, but for all of you, and it is my duty to return the lost sheep to the safe road. . . . I must do it in virtue of my oath, to which I remain faithful.

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* Most of the material on Nicholas I comes from my study: *L'Empereur Nicolas I et l'esprit national russe,* Louvain, 1928.

This idea of service, in fulfillment of duty to God and the state, was the Alpha and Omega of Nicholas's philosophy. He never forgot the December rebellion and his "friends of December". He was profoundly convinced, like Metternich, like Guizot, that the average man desired first of all peace and security, peace as a means to pursue his happiness, security for his family, for the fruits of his labour, for his property. To this end he applied all the years of his long reign. To this end he fought revolution and revolutionary ideas relentlessly, attempting at the same time to create a state of affairs in which there should not be any temptations of a revolutionary character. As early as 1826, he wrote to his minister of the interior, Count Lanskoy: "In all cases I seek and always will seek *rather to forestall evil*, than *to pursue it by punishment when it has already materialized*." Like Metternich, he believed in the necessity of reform, but also that reform must come from above, from constituted authority, and that wise reform was the "progressive development of institutions accomplished by legal methods". Like Guizot, whom he disliked personally, Nicholas believed firmly and profoundly in the ultimate, the cosmic rightness of his first principles. As an absolute monarch, Nicholas would not have permitted encroachment upon his rights and prerogatives by anyone, yet he had limited these rights and prerogatives himself by subjecting them to the ultimate good of the state. Believing steadfastly in the divine right of kings, in the mystical essence of divine rule obtained through the anointment at his coronation, Nicholas was not led by these beliefs to forget reality and the demands of times. In a letter to Queen Victoria, he wrote: "At present members of royal houses must strive to be worthy of their high position in order to reconcile public opinion with it." Yet he had maintained a hostile attitude towards Louis Philippe throughout the latter's reign, because he believed that the "bourgeois-king" neglected to fulfill his duty towards Charles X, the legitimate sovereign; and this notwithstanding the fact that he had strongly advised King Charles against issuing the July ordinances. To Baron Bourgoing, the French chargé d'affaires, he said after the revolution of 1830:

> "If during the riots which have just shaken Paris, the mob had sacked the Russian embassy and made public my dispatches, one would have been much surprised to find that I advised against the *coup d'état*; one would have been much astonished to find that the autocrat of all the Russias prescribed to his representative to recommend to the constitutional King the strict observation of the Constitution established and sworn to".

This attitude of Emperor Nicholas I is characteristic: although opposed to constitutional forms of government, he considered it a sacred duty of the King of France to observe the Constitution, once he had sworn to it. There can be no doubt that had Nicholas I been in the place of Charles X, he would not have attempted to destroy the Constitution, once he had accepted it; it was like breaking military regulations.

Like Guizot, Nicholas was profoundly influenced by his religious convictions; but his Russian Orthodox religion, in contrast to Guizot's Protestantism, was fatalistic and so strong that Nicholas saw in almost everything the direct intervention of Divine Providence. In a letter to King Frederick-William IV of

Prussia, written in 1850, Nicholas sums up as follows the twenty-five years of his reign:

> If during this period some real good has been achieved for my fatherland and if posterity should judge it so, I will be highly rewarded for the many hard hours of my laborious life. From the very beginning of my reign, having been called upon against my will to perform duties for which I had never been prepared, and facing an absolutely abnormal situation, how would I have been able to carry on if it had not been for an obvious direct intervention of Our Lord, on Whom alone I have always completely relied?

V

Thus we find in Nicholas I, as in Metternich and Guizot, the same fundamental principles based on the conception of duty and service, rather than on rights and prerogatives. All three had a profound attachment to the interests of the state, for all three the state was supreme, for all three the monarchical principle, because of its quality of permanence, alone offered a means of governing under conditions of political and social peace. It is in the conservative ideas of Guizot, Metternich, and Nicholas I that we must seek the source of the ideology and principles of modern Fascism and Hitlerism, rather than in the amorphous teachings of the socialists. As for conservatism, it manifestly cannot be interpreted or defined as a belief in the eternity of traditional institutions, as a doctrine of rigidity, of immobility. Quite the contrary, conservatism represents faith in the greater realization of our aspirations. But this conception of conservatism presupposes also the fixed conviction that being part of a material world we must take into account its laws.

Such a conception stops short at the danger line beyond which ideas are substituted for facts; it recognizes and rejects those reforms which bear the stamp of too bold aspirations. It is impossible to trace this danger line in general, but at each innovation, on the occasion of every reform, this line appears and becomes more precise as the reform takes shape. Thus true conservatism does not attack age-old institutions which have proved their adaptability to change; it rejects, however, projects which belong to the world of ideas and do not respond to the logic of facts. Furthermore, true conservatism does not proceed with a reform unless it is convinced that the reform in question is already virtually accomplished, that evolution has already prompted life to find a different and more appropriate setting. Thus it cannot be led into adopting reforms or institutions built by the mind entirely in abstraction.

Finally the mission of conservatism is to assure continuity. From the remotest past of civilization to the present day the long chain of human achievements has often been broken by violent outbursts. The task of conservatism is to reduce to a minimum such vandalism, which is too often masked by seductive slogans and abstract aspirations; to assure the harmonious development of the political and social faculties of man and the realization of the rightful aspirations of humanity within the framework of our institutions; to teach humanity respect and love, to lead it gradually to the accomplishment of its greatest ideal—peace, and to revive in it the long lost faculty, the greatest of God's gifts—faith in life.

Not That It Matters

F. KESTON CLARKE

THERE are, I observe, many excellent institutions willing, for a fee, to give earnest young people postal instruction in a magnificent variety of subjects from picture-framing to Old Gothic. Most of these courses are designed to assist young workers in their work. But there are older persons, no less earnest, who have done their bit of mere work, and now wish to undertake *Work.* They would like to embark upon careers of Social Usefulness, and don't know how to push off.

I therefore give herewith my short course for intending tillers of the Uplift field. I charge no fee; and I guarantee that the ensuing half-dozen or so lessons will teach you all you want to know. Anyway after reading them I'm sure you won't want me to tell you any more, so what could be fairer than that?

Lesson 1. Introductory. What is Sociology? Now, that's a very intelligent question. Well, if you will pop upstairs and protrude yourself, after the manner of King Stephen, from an upper window, you will unfailingly observe that there is Something Wrong With the World. In fact there are many things; but we can sort them for convenience into (a) Social Scourges, (b) Social Menaces, and (c) Social Problems.

You need not concern yourself with Scourges. In former times the word connoted diseases that were unpleasant and incurable. Today (see advertisements) nothing is incurable and (see illustrated advertisements) those who have been Joyfully Cured are rather more repulsive than the Still Suffering. Menaces too may be passed over with a quick, nervous gesture. Menaces are already quite adequately dealt with by the Sunday papers; and as they are always invented on Fridays shortly before going to press and invariably forgotten by Monday, the amateur gets little chance. My next lesson will introduce you to Problems.

Exercise. (a) Learn the following words: Employable Person; Progressive Improvement; Severe Restriction; Selected Applicant; Total Depravity.

(b) If four families share a room and each family keeps a butler, whose job is it to open the door to the Inspector of Adenoids?

Lesson 2. The population is divided into (a) Problems and (b) Tacklers. Are you an Inebriate, an Illiterate or (pardon my pedagogic forthrightness) an Illegitimate? If so, you are a Problem. I hasten to add that this is nothing to be ashamed of. All sorts of things, from musk-rats to Waterloo Bridge, are Problems. If, on the other hand, you happen to be an Enthusiastic Member, a Person Co-opted onto a Sub-Committee, or (best of all) an Honorary Vice-President, you may fairly claim to be a Tackler. The position is a little complicated by the fact that, sociologically, most of us live double or even quadruple lives. Tacklers may be Problems in their spare time just as Producers are also Consumers. The world of *Work* is made happier and more interesting through being made up of Inebriates who are putting down Nudists; Nudists who are abolishing Speed-hounds; Speed-hounds who are combating Free-Lovers; Free-Lovers who are stamping out Inebriates; and so on in little circles. The uproar is frightful but the kiddies simply love it.

Exercise. (a) Do you regard the Slimming Craze as anti-social? If not, do you maintain that Girth Control is more important than Birth Control? (b) Which do you regard as the more ghastly—the Problem of Selling or the Problem of Paying? (c) How do you deal with the Problem of the Problem Child? (N.B. The answer to this is a lamming.)

Lesson 3. Becoming a Joiner. Having decided what kind of Tackling you wish to-er-tackle, the next step is to Join. Almost anything will do. There are Societies for the Furtherance, for the Abolition, for the Prohibition, for the Restriction, Propagation, Prevention, Elevation, Encouragement, and Prosecution. I personally recommend Societies for the Abolition, as these always have the best lunches. A warning: don't join any of the groups of studious persons who hold vague meetings at short irregular intervals in public bars. Although these movements do a great deal of Taking Up and Putting Down, they are really Problems, not Tacklers.

Exercise. (a) Having regard to the repeated failures of mankind to eliminate its oppressors, do you think it would be more efficacious to start eliminating the oppressed? (b) Draft a letter of apology to be sent by a sterilizing surgeon who has operated, in error, on the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee.

Lesson 4. Having joined, you must not expect to find yourself on the Committee immediately. You must start at the bottom of the ladder and be first an ordinary Worker, or even a mere Helper. These duties however have their compensations. One old pupil of mine was made a subscription-hound; and an evilly-disposed Secretary gave him the list of all the hardest-faced men of substance in town. Each one, on being approached, said "Sorry, old man!" and offered my young friend a smoke. At the end of the day he had collected nothing whatever for the Society; but had acquired 273 choice Havanas for himself.

Learn the following words and phrases: Rejected Applicant; Rateable Occupier; Average Voter; Registered Retailer; Fare-Paying Passenger; Approved Inmate; Certified Obstructionist.

Exercise. (a) If a Standing Joint Committee passes by-laws at the rate of nine per hour, is it in order to take these lying down? (b) How many economical ways are there of using up discarded tonsils?

Lesson 5. After serving your time at subscriptions you can expect to be made a Special Investigator. This will bring you into contact with such stark woodcut-subjects as "A Day in the Life of a Working Woman"; "Household Budgets"; and "The Habits of the Poor". Now is the time to acquaint yourself with the science of Statistics. These valuable numbers vary from year to year. A popular one used to be, "Distance of the sun from the earth, 93,000,000 miles"; but this is not much used nowadays. Round figures are so unfashionable. The best statistic I know for ordinary purposes is "*87.35 per cent., and undoubtedly more if we include East Anglia*". I have used this statistic for all manner of subjects from Buchmanism to the Dope

Traffic and it never fails to elicit the welcome "*Hear, hear!*"

Exercise. (a) Draw up a skeleton Report on the Alarming Increase of Unwiped Noses among the Children of Racing Punters. (b) The Household Budget of Joe Stoggs, which you have just compiled, shows (apparently) that his three children live exclusively on coal and candles. How many oranges per day should your Society issue to correct this diet?

Lesson 6. Finally, it is necessary for the (by now) advanced student to qualify himself in Public Speaking. This can only be self-taught. It will be recalled by the keen reader that Demosthenes improved himself in the oratorical art by placing stones in his mouth. This is a most valuable wrinkle. Many modern speakers would be greatly improved if their vocal orifices could be filled with stones, chunks of concrete, or even feather pillows.

In public speaking a certain amount of caution is advisable. I had a pupil named Horace, a most promising youngster. It was arranged that he should have the task of lecturing at the headquarters of the Rescue Society. The Rescue people went out into the slums and collected all the toughest eggs they knew; pitiable objects simply crying out to be rescued. Horace was to try one more appeal to what was left of their hearts and intelligences.

After the speech Horace came to see me, looking rather upset. I gave him a drink and said "Well?"

"My speech", said Horace, "was a corker."

"Yes?"

"When I stood on the platform and surveyed the leering, degraded faces before me, I seemed to feel an inward prophetic fire. I felt I was battling with loathsome monsters who yet might be recalled to the semblance of human beings. I opened softly; trying vainly to play on their better natures; then, as their scowls grew more and more menacing and unregenerate evil seemed to flash from their eyes, I changed to acrid invective and savage denunciation. For fifty minutes I lambasted those vipers with galling taunts and bitter scorn. I purged them with hyssop. I chastised them with scorpions. Before I could end my peroration, they leaped from their seats with frenzied howls and obscene gibberings . . . it was horrible, horrible! How the Secretary managed to get me away I don't know. But I shall see those bestial faces to my dying day."

"And what did the Secretary say?" I asked.

"He was furious," moaned Horace. "It appeared that I'd got mixed up in the numbers of the rooms; and I'd been haranguing the Executive Committee."

My final word therefore, to those who believe they have received a Call, is . . . don't forget, it may prove to be a wrong number.

Exercise. You'd better try swimming.

The Metamorphosis of Marxism

NICHOLAS BERDYAEV

WHICH is the true heir of Karl Marx, Communism, Social Democracy, Bolshevism, or Menshevism? This is a much vexed question. The answer to it depends on the angle from which Marxism is viewed. If we stress the sociological determinism of Marx, then the Social Democrats must be recognized as more consistent Marxists than the Communists; but if we stress fidelity to the revolutionary spirit, then the Communists show more sign of it than do the Social Democrats who have lost it. The Communists alone, imbued with the messianic idea of the proletariat, are really consumed with a crusading ardour for the destruction of the old world and the building up of a new. And it is because Communism, as distinct from Social Democracy, thus assumes a religious character that it is hostile to and persecutes all other forms of belief.

But what are we to think of sociological determinism, which gives Marxism the character of a scientific socialism and distinguishes it from utopian socialism?

Marxism is now undergoing metamorphoses which are possible only because the old classical Marxism involved two radically opposed principles—one materialist and the other idealist—and so could transform itself into a system contrary to its economic determinism. Economic and historical materialism was never a complete account of Marxism, nor expressed its essential character. Generally Marxism has been regarded as the ultimate and extreme form of determinism—both followers and adversaries were agreed on this. Despite the fact that a materialist, Epicurus, was the only indeterminist of ancient philosophy, it has been commonly thought that a philosophy of materialism must inevitably be determinist. Moreover, the strongest impression left on the mind by Marxism was its insistence on the part played by economics in determining not only the entire development and structure of human society, but also the intellectual and spiritual life of man. No place was left for liberty and spontaneity. Nevertheless, from the beginning a difficulty was apparent: how could a process determined solely by economics automatically bring about a perfect Communist régime, in which reason and justice would be triumphant, the irrational principle conquered, and all life rationally organized? The material economic process, admittedly irrational, could hardly furnish a guarantee of this.

However, it must not be forgotten that the thought of Marx was greatly influenced by the panlogism of Hegel. Marx considered that the Logos was inherent in the material process and that it would conquer. He reversed the philosophy of Hegel and transposed, so to speak, the ideal principle by inserting it in matter. This ideal principle, logical and rational, is active in his materialism as it is in the idealism of Hegel, and its results are just as rational. Thus Marx shared the views of Hegel on liberty as resulting from necessity, as a necessity consciously recognized. His thought, however, like that of others, varied according as it looked towards the past or the future. Determinism of its nature looks backwards rather than forwards; its transposition into the future can only be due to a confusion of two distinct planes. Marx always maintained that socialism was determined by the necessary economic process of the past and that it could not be the result of liberty and free creation. But in the socialistic future, the determination existing in the past through economics would exist no longer. That is why Marx and Engels speak of the "jump" that must be made in order to pass from the region of necessity to that of liberty. The principle of necessity is not of universal application to all time; it bears only on the past, and especially on the past under the capitalist system. Though everything be determined by necessity in the bourgeois-capitalist world, it will not be so in the socialist world, because social reason will then have attained to the mastery of elementary and irrational forces, and social man will be the master of his own life and the life of the world.

Sociological determinism can therefore be given an interpretation different from that which it has had up to the present, and this is what the philosophy of Soviet Communism attempts to do. The sociological determinism of Marx was a reflex of the capitalist world, in which everything was conditioned by economics. Marx lived in the midst of this world, he never knew the era of proletarian revolution, and he could not be acquainted with the new liberty found there. Russian Communism considers itself to be this revolutionary era, and for this reason it can develop a doctrine of liberty and of necessity different from that of classical Marxism. Hence Soviet philosophy is able to surmount determinism and affirm a particular kind of indeterminism. Leninism is no long authentic Marxism, although it still considers itself to be such. In reality it is a Marxism bent on moulding the future rather than on explaining the past. The Social Democrats on the other hand, more consistent than the Communists with regard to the determination of social development by economics, consider that revolution and the proletarian dictatorship cannot be produced in every country because this requires the existence of a powerful proletariat, created by a developed industrial system. But they have not fully assimilated the thought of Marx where he is concerned with the future, and with the messianic mission of the proletariat, which cannot be deduced from economic revolution. These Social Democrats, who pride themselves on being the orthodox successors of Marx, are considerably upset by the fact that in Soviet Russia it is not economics that determine politics, but politics that determine economics. Faithful to Marxist determinism they cannot conceive how a revolution and a proletarian dictatorship is possible in an industrially backward country, with a rural and peasant economy and an extremely restricted working class. Marx certainly did not foresee such a contingency. In the Russian Revolution the dominating forces were not the *realities* whose presence seemed to Marx indispensable for the proletarian revolution, but the *ideas* of Marx concerning the revolution. Thus it was not economics and productive material forces that determined the mind, it was the mind, that is the Marxist mind, which determined the material conditions. The power of the central committee of the Communist

Party can shape as it likes the economics of a great country. The Marxist ideology is supreme, it has become an obligatory catechism, but it bears no relation to the actual facts. Industrial development has not preceded Communism as an indispensable premise; on the contrary it has been created by Communism, as the Five Year Plan witnesses. The development of production which, according to Marx, should have come about under Capitalism, is in fact being promoted under the auspices of Communism, which, in flat contradiction of the determinist and evolutionary elements of Marxism, is building up a new world on virgin soil.

Russian Communism can do this because it feels itself to be free from restraint, in the unhampered enjoyment of the proletarian revolution, no longer burdened by the capitalist world to which the thought of Marx was still subject. For the Communists the world has become plastic, to be moulded like wax to their will; every Soviet youth feels that he can remake the world. This new spirit has wholly freed itself from the weight of sociological determinism: Communist power recks no more of economics.

In Soviet Russia there is indeed a positive obsession for economics, which dominates ordinary life, but it has quite another significance. It is a constructive force dependent on the party, the whole body of the the people, a rationalization of everything, a levelling of society conditioned by social reason, where all irrationality in social life is at an end. According to the terminology actually adopted by Soviet philosophy, it is not the forces of production which rule, but the producer-reactions, that is to say the revolutionary class war. In other words, it is no longer economics but class action which plays the decisive part. A well organized revolutionary class inspired with the proletarian idea can do anything, can turn the world upside down, can establish a dictatorship, even though it be numerically restricted and the country be industrially backward. The working class is a qualitative, not a quantitative, category. The revolutionary minority can dominate a country or even the entire world if it has really caught the spirit of the kingdom of the free.

The Soviet Communist conception of the world avoids materialism only because it has adopted the principle of quality as against that of quantity. Everything is decided by the quality, the truth, the orthodoxy of the proletarian consciousness. A small minority can represent this consciousness; and the fact that it professes the truth gives it the right to rule. Here the quantitative mass of the workers is not essential. A mystical activity is ascribed to the conscious minority of the revolutionary class while the dynamic power of the idea of the proletariat and the myth of its messianic vocation assume fantastic proportions. It is not matter that is active, but man; not as an individual, but as a social being. This conception implies a radical change in the Marxist vision of the universe, it presumes a *crisis* of materialism and an attempt to create a new philosophy.

II

Only the actual philosophy of Leninist Marxism, which corresponds to proletarian revolution and is yet nothing more than a new indeterminism, can explain the fact of a proletarian revolution and dictatorship in a social environment in which according to the old Marxist determinism they could not possibly be. The Russian Revolution has not been made "according to Marx", though indisputably "in his name". It was effected rather "according to Dostoievsky" than to Marx, if the latter's name implies that economic evolution determines socialism.

Economic materialism is the profession of faith of Russian Communists, but it does not explain the Communist Revolution as it actually came about. Moreover, Leninists prefer to use the term *dialectic materialism* instead of *economic materialism.* This is not merely a matter of terminology. In fact, according to the view of the world which has now been formed in the atmosphere of proletarian revolution, social development is not determined by economics but by a dialectic; and to "dialectic" is given a sense opposed to that of mechanist materialism. According to the latter, progress is provoked by a shock from without and influenced by environment. "Dialectic" is different, it is revolution arising out of matter itself, and in the latest philosophy of Marxism it is styled *auto-dynamism.*

Mechanist materialism is not compatible with an active and revolutionary philosophy. This is what the young Soviet philosophers have now grasped. Mechanist materialism, which accounts for everything by an impulse from outside and the influence of environment, is clearly incompatible with revolutionary enthusiasm and its belief in the possibility of transforming the world. It is true that the term *materialism* remains an obligatory symbol and to be called by any other name but *materialist* is forbidden, but in reality materialism is disappearing, the mechanist explanation of world-movements is rejected, in other words, determinism has been laid aside.

For ourselves we are more radical and thoroughgoing than the Soviet philosophers; we would say that materialism is a conservative and inactive conception of the world, engendered by passive submission to external environment, and leaving no room for action and creative reaction. Even calling it a "dialectic" will not save materialism, for as such it is meaningless, a compromise into which a dialectic cannot fit. Already Marx and Engels had added to the dialectic which they borrowed from Hegel a powerfully dynamic, actual, and revolutionary character. The new dialectic materialists recognize in matter an active and dynamic principle unknown to the old mechanists. This amounts to attributing to matter an active and spiritual principle which is not determined from without. This is really what the Leninists hold. Their dialectic supposes the presence within matter of contradictions which produce movement and dynamic development. This is almost to allow matter an inner freedom. The result is a far more indeterminist dialectic than Hegel would have allowed.

According to Hegel, the dialectic process is subordinated to ideal logical necessity, for not only is there a materialist determinism, but there is also an idealist determinism, and it is this last that Hegel taught. Since he held that liberty was the result of dialectic necessity, he could not allow the world any spontaneity, for this would have contradicted his panlogism. To him only the rational was real.

But the Leninist philosophy of the proletarian revolution period recognizes the spontaneity, the *auto-dynamism* of the revolutionary minority. The titanic will of this minority, powerfully organized and inspired by one faith and one idea, spontaneously and of itself can work social miracles. Here indeed *scientific socialism* which is committed to determinist social evolution, is abandoned in favour of *utopian socialism*, which is no longer visionary, but has become energetic and revolutionary. Utopia can be brought into being by the effort of a vast will. The academic objections of Menshevists and Social Democrats carry no weight in face of this revolutionary auto-dynamism. The old Marxist determinism is thus defeated by deeds, by real achievements more forcible than mere intellectual argument. Indeterminism cannot ignore the resistance of matter nor be unconscious of the realities against which action must be taken. But the Soviet mind understands these stresses between the activity of social man and the resistance of matter rather in the spirit of the earlier philosophy of Fichte than in the spirit of materialist philosophy.

What link then remains with Marx? Does his philosophy offer any basis for so vast a social indeterminism? I am inclined to think it does. There is a dualism in Marx, an opposition of contradictory principles. And the Communists are faithful, we may say, not to his science but to his religion.

III

Though Marxism is an integral, monist, monolithic system, from which, according to orthodox Marxists, it is impossible to remove a single stone, yet actually it contains elements diverse in nature, origin, and meaning. On one hand there is the scientific element, namely its scientific view of social evolution looked at from the angle of extreme determinism and also of socialism seen solely as the necessary result of economic development. On the other hand, there are its messianic elements, with myths and axioms of its own, and its interpretation of social phenomena by a standard of absolute values, and in relation to its messianic hope in the proletariat which will (according to its ideas) eventually liberate humanity and create a new world, where justice, strong and perfect, will reign and where the old darkness will be dissipated forever.

I have often drawn attention to the Judaic-religious sources of the belief in the messiahship of the proletariat and in the secularist millennium of Marx. The philosophy from which scientific determinism derives, is not adapted to such a faith and hope. Hence Marx was driven to create the myth of the proletariat, a myth which is active and dynamic to the highest degree and operates even where this proletariat does not actually exist, and where there can be no question of economic determinism.

In the determinist monism on which classical Marxism prided itself, there is, in fact, a break in continuity. It is found in the axiomatic and mythical elements of Marxism, in the universal category of exploitation regarded as the original sin and the source of all past evils, and in the universal myth of the proletariat as the class messiah, called to save humanity. It is found in the faith in a glorious future, the ultimate triumph of the logos and of reason following on the darkness and irrationality of the social economic process which has so far produced nothing but wickedness and injustice. It is found in the hope that one day there will be a terrible judgement on the old evil world.

It must be admitted that so far a completely logical system of determinist monism has been held by no one, less indeed, by Marxists than by other materialists, and least of all by Leninists, because such a system is opposed to the very nature of the human spirit. The implicit religious feeling involved in judgement of the past and faith in the future, in a world to be created by the revolutionary activity of man, can never concur with pure determinist monism, which lays stress on the secondary problems of the relations of spirit and matter, of the psychic and the physical, or, as the Marxists express it, of consciousness and being.

But going deeper still, we find in revolutionary Marxism an extreme, almost Manichean dualism, dividing the world into two kingdoms: the kingdom of Ormuz, of light and reason, and the kingdom of Ahriman, of darkness and unreason. These distinctions were present to Marx himself. The bourgeois capitalist world, indeed the exploiting world of the past, is that of Ahriman, the world of matter, where man is the slave of an all-determining economic. The new proletarian and Communist world is that of Ormuz, the world of victorious liberty and reason, where economics no longer determines life and man is no longer enslaved. These are the elements of Marxism which the Communists have inherited and are developing into an ever increasing indeterminism. The Mensheviks and Social Democrats on the other hand concentrate on the determinist elements of Marxism, on which they base the greater possibility of moderation and evolution.

When the young Soviet philosophers insist that it is not productive forces but producer-reactions which count, they are not abandoning Marx, as they are reproached with doing by the pedants of Marxism. Productive forces imply that material economic processes are determined of themselves. Producer-reactions signify an active class war, men freely engaged in combat, urged by revolutionary enthusiasm and energy, in a word, auto-dynamism. Now Marx rejected the formulae of the economists in order to invent his own. Over and above economic laws, above a determined world, he set the struggle of human beings, the class war and class action. I am inclined to think that here lies his greatest merit, for it is thus possible to develop his thought in the direction of indeterminism and admit human free will. It is true that his views may lead to disastrous consequences, but they may also help towards a just appreciation of human activity in society.

IV

Marxism may develop in two ways: either as a doctrine of social reform based on sociological determinism, or towards a social upheaval inspired by a mythical creativeness and ending in free will.

Social Democrats, who follow the first interpretation of Marxism, are tolerant towards religion, which they regard as a private affair, and they are not inclined to religious persecution. The psychological reason for this is clear. They do not consider Marxism to be a religion, but a philosophy that is true only in economics, politics, and social life. Each individual is thus free to have what personal religious beliefs he likes or none at all. The weakness of this Social Democracy lies in its drab and grubby commonplaceness; it is incapable of arousing the enthusiasm of youth.

But the Communists, who follow the second interpretation of Marxism, are fanatically intolerant of religion. Far from admitting it to be a private affair, they regard it as public and social; inevitably therefore they persecute it. They act on Marx's aphorism: "Religion is the opium of the people." Here again the psychological reason is clear, for they consider Marxism to be not a partial truth affecting only the restricted field of social life, but a complete truth adapted to the whole of life, in other words a religion. Hence the right to personal religious beliefs is denied to the citizen; he is bound to profess the faith of Society. Communism in its complete religious and mythical form leads to the deification of Society and to the negation of the value of human personality and its freedom of thought and conscience. Moreover they do not understand Socialism merely as the socialization of economics, with which we might agree, but as the socialization of the human spirit even to its depths, which is anti-Christ.

The philosophy of Hegel is anti-personalist, teaching the absolute domination of the general over the individual and particular, of the state over the person. Marx inherited this anti-personalism and intensified it, despite other elements latent in his thought, notably his perception of human beings over and above economics. But Communism carries this anti-personalism to its extreme: the Communism of the transition period, the creation of Lenin, makes the state absolute; while that which now actually prevails makes society absolute, a shift from the dictator to the mass. It is a return to the old pagan conception of the relation between man and the state, wherein the emancipation of the human spirit from the yoke of Caesar, the triumphant achievement of Christianity, is done away with.

Under new and changing disguises Caesar still seeks to tyrannize over the human spirit and conscience, claiming divine honour. Man must still wage war against Leviathan, the Kingdom of the Beast, who rises up under all forms of imperialism, Roman, Byzantine, or Russian. It takes on a new shape in capitalism, which is associated with individualism, though actually under it there is even less freedom for the individual. Its latest forms are those of Communism and Fascism, which also repudiates human personality and violates man's spiritual life without always allowing him the element of social justice afforded by Communism.

To defend man, his human dignity, his economic and spiritual rights, is the watchword of Christendom today. A new society and a new order, more just and more humane, can only be born by the admission of supreme value to human personality. In the name of each and every human personality made in the image of God and capable of eternal life, the new order of society, the new and true commune of men must be organized. To this end we must discrown all systems of social monism, which, because they are imperialist, must lead to tyranny. Christianity is essentially a personal system. And we cannot believe that an individualistic capitalism is any more favourable to personality than is Communism, whose anti-personalism, we might almost say, is borrowed from it.

The constructive work our own time demands from us is the building up of a social system which shall correspond to the eternal Christian truth of personality. Such a system no more exists in capitalism than in Communism or Fascism. It might be described as a *personal socialism.* It will allow to man creative liberty, but will effect its purpose nobly, without the vast yet narrow tyranny of Lenin.

REVIEWS

The "New History"*

Dr. Achorn strove for two objects in writing his five-hundred-thousand-word book: first, a modern history "that shall be entertaining as well as informing", and second, "a more satisfactory synthesis along the lines of the New History than has so far been offered". There can be no doubt about his having triumphantly realized both of these aims. The book does entertain (although perhaps not always as Dr. Achorn intends), and it does inform; indeed it drops ton after ton of information upon the head of the reader. As for the New History (which apparently requires the stuffing of books with the boiled-down contents of an encyclopaedia), this is a classic piece; Harry Elmer Barnes himself might almost have written it. Here indeed is a grandstand view of the whole pageant of progress since men rid themselves of superstition and authority. The amoeba and the nebulae are here, so too are the proton, the adding machine, the calory, the fourth dimension, the horse car, the income tax, eugenics, vaccination, hormones, epidemics, the motor car, and the radio.

The New Historians, even as the old, insist strongly that sound historical scholarship must display the quality of objectivity. This used to mean that the historian should be honest of mind and critical in judgement, that he should tell the truth and not colour his account with his own subjective prejudices. But among the New Historians, and conspicuously in Dr. Achorn, we find a new and higher objectivity, which might be called the objectivity of the outsider. You attain this quality of mind by liberating yourself from all devotion to the things men have always cared deeply about, as for example their religion or their country. Thus detached from the general human scene, you can describe, like a disinterested spectator, the history of such movements as the rise of the Church, or the Reformation, or the Russian Revolution. From this position you are supposedly capable of seeing the truth more clearly than any partisan in the struggle can see it. To be sure, from this outside position you cannot get a very good view of things inside, but all that you miss are such insignificant trifles as the real reasons why men do what they do.

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* EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION AND POLITICS SINCE 1815 *by Erik Achorn* (HARCOURT, BRACE. 879 pp. $5.00).

From such an external point of view the history of the last century and a half in Europe corresponds pretty well to the Marxian version of it, and therefore it is not surprising that Dr. Achorn's book should possess a certain Marxian savour; for Marx and his followers were and remain alien to the true civilization of Europe and in conscious revolt against the theory of human nature which underlies that civilization. I do not mean to say that Dr. Achorn is a Marxist, but one may certainly infer from his book that he is a product of that utilitarian-liberal school, which in our time blurs off into Marxism and is almost as barren of insight into the true substance of European life. Therein lies the reason why this new modern history text-book is such a sprawling and chaotic thing. The author undoubtedly made a mighty effort to give us an organic synthesis, and from his outsider viewpoint it may even be admitted that he did very well; but the thing simply cannot be done from that viewpoint. To write an organic historical synthesis one must know the inner nature of organic life, and this can be no more than guessed at by one who does not experience that life coursing through himself.

Dr. Achorn, in his early pages, wastes no time in giving us very revealing hints of an abysmal ignorance of that Europe which was before the modern revolutionary age, the Europe of old Christendom which is still fundamentally Europe. He writes about that Europe very much as one might describe the odd ways and quaint superstitions of some distant barbaric people; to him the Middle Ages, Europe's great creative age, were chiefly marked by provinciality, uniformity, otherworldliness, and ignorance. Therefore, to the extent that we have left behind all the distinctive marks of old Christendom we have progressed; that assumption permeates the whole book, and it is an inevitable consequence of this kind of objectivity.

Writers of history who thus combine a vast and erudite knowledge of modern revolutionary transformation and dissolution with only the feeblest grasp upon Europe's heritage of mind, tradition, and spirit, of course, have long been writing text-books for us. But their deficiencies become now increasingly apparent, for the reason that they no longer can enlighten us on the great questions relevant to our age. They can still tell us satisfactorily enough about the action of Mr. Lippmann's "acids of modernity", but they can barely even hint at the meaning of the resistance to those acids; yet that resistance is manifestly growing and striking the attention of all deeply thoughtful men. As an illustration of what I mean, there is the fact that these writers can never adequately explain the resistance of European peoples to Communism; they can say truly enough that capitalists fear expropriation, but they cannot appreciate the instinctive popular dread of the threatened destruction of a thousand precious things the roots of which lie embedded in the sanctions of a Christian past. Similarly, such writers can never tell the whole truth about Fascism; they can give us only the familiar Marxian formula, missing entirely the appeal to historic tradition, the assertion of spiritual forces, the brave effort for discipline, authority, and justice, the chivalric and idealistic elements, all of which make up the really significant content of Fascism. These writers, moreover, are quite incapable of appreciating the deep meaning of the fall of Prussia and the return in our times of so many things Roman and mediaeval. As for the great Catholic revival, which is the major significant feature of the age, they cannot begin to understand it; since they see the Church as but the relic of a dead superstition, the only way they can treat its revival is to pay no attention to it. Thus Dr. Achorn in a lengthy chapter on twentieth-century culture gives but a scant three pages to "Religion in a Changing World"; and in these, after a brief statement of Pius XI's (sic) condemnation of modernism (thus resisting all progressive change), he discusses only one writer who "deserves mention in connection with religion". This writer is none other than Anatole France!

Such are the great reasons why it is necessary to say hard things about a book which, I strongly suspect, will be very well received by the "moderns" who have cut themselves off from the old traditions of Europe. Dr. Achorn, I have no doubt, will be said to have written a lively, entertaining, informative, and encyclopaedic synthesis of modern history; but he has not really touched the organic substance of European life. Everything external to the thing is here; but the thing itself is absent.

ROSS J. S. HOFFMAN

Religion and the American Dream *

THE Chaplain of Columbia University has written a short book which bears the marks of candour and earnestness. We feel that Mr. Knox genuinely wishes the world well and would lend a sympathetic ear to any spiritual "case" we chose to confide to him. He is no bigot and no egotist, but *homo bonae voluntatis.* But these qualities of good humour and charity do not suffice to render a man a thinker. And one is at a loss to estimate at what audience the volume is aimed. If to undergraduates and alumni, why the postlude of documentation; if to the small group of informed and critical readers, why the repetition of current commonplaces?

The book lacks the moving fervour and eloquence of Niebuhr's *Reflections on the End of an Era* as well as Niebuhr's deep and communicated apprehension of classical (*i.e.*, pre-eighteenth-century) religion. It also wants in precision of language and in close and acute reasoning. Argument we can follow (whether it be in theology or political science); exhortation we recognize (whether in sermon or "silver-tongued" oration); platform of *agenda* we scan for its viability as working creed. But the treatise must inform and clarify our understanding; the programme enunciate what we are to do; the vision kindle our imaginations and fire our wills. Mr. Knox's book really succeeds at none of these ends.

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* RELIGION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM *by Raymond C. Knox* (COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS. 155 pp. $1.75).

Alike on the religious and on the political side, Knox is a vague and inconclusive "liberal". A theist, he boldly rejects Otto's "numinous" as a complete account of the divine, yet avoids the surrender to moralism. But except for the assumptions that mind is ultimate and must have created matter, and that the divine must transcend by including whatever man finds highest in himself, Knox leaves us quite uncertain how we know God or how we are to test our knowledge of Him or upon what authority we believe. He rejects Scripture and ecclesiastical warrants alike. The Bible is a progressive revelation, and its truth is discernible in terms of our own response to it; it is inspired, as Coleridge said, "because it inspires me". The miraculous is completely evacuated, except of course in the Whitmanian (and, one may add, Pickwickian) sense that all life is miraculous. "A liberalizing instruction in religion will make it plain that these antiquated views are to have no place whatever in present thought." Religion, for Chaplain Knox, is doubtless synonymous with its American version, Christianity; but then it is Christianity as interpreted by the experience of the individual and the present day. He has little respect for tradition (*i.e.*, the experience of past thinkers and mystics), and though he quotes the Christ, it is on the basis of private exegesis. Actually, liberal religion is a philosophy which seeks, under the name of Christianity, to synthesize whatever is currently judged to be the "highest" and "best" thought of the race. God, in effect, becomes the free personification of men's ideals. Without revelation *ab extra*, religious history is reduced to the chronicle of man's "progressive" aspirations toward the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Chaplain Knox follows Dean Inge in rejecting the optimistic determinism of the nineteenth century. He does not believe that society *inevitably* improves. But he appears to retain the notion of "progress" in religion—a notion entirely distinct, it must be remembered, from "development" in Newman's sense. We are admonished that religion must so be presented as to give our contemporaries "the reflection of their own best thoughts and aspirations"—which appears to mean that religion follows, rather than precedes and corrects, the "natural mind". We hear of a "true" conception of God and of a "clearer vision" of God; but in a philosophy without absolutes it is not immediately apparent what the tests of truth and clarity may be. Actually, Knox is a pragmatist. But a pragmatist, as much as any other philosopher, ought to reject the conception of progress *in vacuo* and *ad nihil*. Knox dismisses merely humanitarian conceptions of religion; and what, then, is "progress" in religion, or in religious thought, to be measured by?

We can legitimately speak of progress only with reference to some provided or envisaged goal.

Mr. Knox's politico-economic creed is equally indecisive. He believes in a "planned society", apparently of the Rooseveltian genre—though the name of the President is nowhere cited; and the New Deal is conspicuously absent as a phrase and present as a conception. Not till the end of his book does he mention *fascism* and *communism*, and then it is to hail them as working faiths, "passionately held" and by adherents who "know what they believe". But both are rejected in favour of the "American dream", democracy, which Knox admits to be a far vaguer ideal, held by our countrymen without ardent conviction. "Democracy" is identified with no specific programme but with eulogistically loose phrases. It is the "self-control of a whole people, and planning, the product of the best intelligence which they are able to contribute". Is there any social system, whatever its name or sign, which would not subscribe to this? Somewhat more specifically, "Justice and common sense demand a greater equity in the distribution of goods". What is "common sense" that it should make such a demand; and what is "greater equity"? Is it economic equality, or a bare subsistence for all—a dole to the starving to ward off strikes, or remuneration in agreement with an altered estimate of what constitute the most valuable types of human labour? Knox attempts no definition and no programme. He is avowedly hostile to the *laisser-faire* system (or want of it) and against the "rugged individualism" which it perpetuates; but he seems ignorant of specific programmes mediate between Capitalism and Communism—such programmes as Distributism and Agrarianism; and in any case he judges such programmes beyond his domain: religion must assert the end to be served, leaving "each individual to decide as to methods".

In thus joining religion with the cause of "social justice", Mr. Knox appears, like most liberals, to separate himself from classical Christianity, even though he and his school may fairly claim to develop implications of Christ's teaching. "The poor ye have always with you". "Blessed are the poor"—the "indigent poor" as well as the "poor in spirit". "How hardly shall a rich man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." If you deprive the poor of their poverty, you deprive them of the special blessing reserved for them. As for the rich—they acquire no social or moral virtue through forcible deprivation of their goods. Poverty has ever been held by the Catholic Church to be a "counsel of perfection": "Go sell all thou hast and give to the poor"; but this poverty must be voluntary and not legislated. Classical Christianity, however, is other-worldly: "treasures in Heaven" are to be the object of our spiritual thrift. In Knox's book there is no word of a future life where *post mortem* justice shall be pronounced and Lazarus shall lie in Abraham's bosom while Dives burns in the fire of corruption. Classical Christianity believes, indeed, that the Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of God, but only at the Second Coming. Knox and the liberals trust that the Day of the Lord is to be induced by the moral and social evolution of the race.

Chaplain Knox must, however, be acquitted of any belief in a legislated righteousness. A social system expresses the convictions of a society; and there can be no permanent change in institutions till men's convictions have been altered. Further—and greatly to his credit—he does not surrender submissively to an hypostasized economic law. The law of supply and demand may be inviolable, but then men's desires are variable and capable of education. The "profit motive" may at present constitute the *ruling love* of most men; but most men have other motives as well, and the business of the world will not collapse if the dominance of other more socially oriented motives be elicited. If the constitution of "human nature" cannot be changed, it can at any rate be rearranged. With Mr. T. S. Eliot (in his recent Primer) Knox would agree: "Economic determinism is today a god before whom we fall down and worship with all kinds of music. I believe that these matters may ultimately be determined by what people want; that when anything is generally accepted as desirable, economic laws can be upset in order to achieve it. . . ."

But to raise a few more questions, Mr. Knox invokes the "American dream". What is it? Has there been but one? Have the visions of the founding fathers and subsequent prophets all cohered? The "visions" of Massachusetts Bay and Virginia, of Hamilton and Jefferson and Jackson and Emerson, of North and South, of State Street and Quincy (to use Henry Adams's antithesis), of Wall Street and Wisconsin? Have all these spoken to no discernibly different purport?

Further, and by way of conclusion, there are times for visions and times for programmes. "Democracy" has become a mere politician's slogan. It is countered, in fascism and communism, by living and operative systems. The "American dream" seems likely to remain less than a reality if it lingers much longer in a state of undefined aspiration; and we fear Chaplain Knox's pulpit will confront empty pews if he cannot help us to answer our urgent question, "What must America *do* to be saved?"

AUSTIN WARREN

A Case in Farming*

LIKE *The Shepherd's Calendar*, Mrs. Evelyn Harris's account of life on her Maryland farm is divided into twelve parts, one for each month of the year. But *The Barter Lady* is not a pastoral; its flavour, except in its report of intimate family scenes and pastimes here and there, is not in the least idyllic. It is the record of a plucky woman's fight against the varieties of punishment with which industrial America chooses to visit good farmers. It is also a commentary, inconsecutive and highly miscellaneous, upon the circumstances of the struggle. The commentary contains about as much of Bruce Barton sententiousness as of the homely wisdom we should expect from so determined a farmer. Perhaps the mixture, which would make the book almost equally suitable for Sunday "feature story" or agrarian tract, is a bit of innocent-mindedness, and a guarantee of sincerity.

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* THE BARTER LADY: A Woman Farmer Sees It Through, *by Evelyn Harris* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. 160 pp. $2.50).

Mrs. Harris is a widow who has been trying to make her historic Chesapeake Bay farm pay taxes, meet interest on mortgages, and take care of living expenses, upkeep, and the education of some very modern children. One gathers that she and her family have lived happily, in the way of farm-dwellers to the manner born, though not always comfortably as comfort is reckoned nowadays; and the children have been educated. For the rest, Mrs. Harris's fight, cheerfully maintained, and most resourcefully waged on every conceivable front, looks like a losing one. One can see nothing but ultimate defeat in the heartbreaking process, related over and over again in this book, of borrowing money at high interest rates to finance crops that pile up losses instead of profits. The merit of Mrs. Harris's story is that she dramatizes—in a way beyond the grasp of our national planners—the hard question of why such inevitable defeat should be the reward of energy, imagination, and real devotion to one of the noblest of human occupations.

In part Mrs. Harris's farm is run on a subsistence basis: her own wool goes into her own blankets, and her vegetables and fruits into her kitchen. Undoubtedly, too, she looks on her farm as a way of life—a home place first of all, not a business. Nevertheless, because her land is adapted to fruit-farming, she does fruit-farming on a large scale and regards herself as a "professional" farmer. Apparently she does not clearly understand that in modern times the two views make a contradiction and not, as of old, an agreeable mixture. She does not know that, as business farmer, she is victimized because she insists on being the other kind of farmer, too.

Fruit-farming is a highly speculative pursuit. Hazards of frost, blight, and insect pests must be circumvented. Insects can be beaten back by poison—if it doesn't "come a rain" to wash the poison off. But poison and machinery for applying it require capital, which must be borrowed. Then come the hazards of the market. Mrs. Harris may have carloads of delicious pears ready for the market (there is one exact moment, and only one, at which nature makes them ready) only to discover that the market is glutted. Or she is bamboozled by commission men, who are really gamblers and who, if they stand to lose by the delivery of pears at a certain price, will claim that the pears arrived in bad condition. Little good does it then do to hop into an airplane (as the redoubtable Mrs. Harris hops into her son's airplane) and suddenly confront the commission men on the railroad siding itself. All farmers cannot do that, dearly though they would love to; and besides, see what the commission men are like.

> These men [she writes] with few exceptions, had waist lines which were far out of line with the measurement of the farmers producing the stuff on which they were making their money. Great diamond rings were on their fingers. Their clothing was cut in the latest style and made of the finest materials. [Mrs. Harris's coat was patched up with adhesive tape!] I was unable to carry on a conversation with most of them because the land of their birth was not the same as mine. Nor was their code of manners the same; their rudeness is the main characteristic I remember. Possibly it was not intentional.

More than that, in this risky business Mrs. Harris must take all the risks. Labourers who pack fruit must be paid in cash (Mrs. Harris has a good deal of the Southern farmer's friendly feeling of responsibility for her help). The freight-hauling railroads and trucks and the manufacturers and venders of crates, sprays, machinery must have cash. All of these operate on a "cost plus" basis. But the farmer, who must buy on the "cost plus" basis, cannot sell on it. The system is wholly against him, and that is the burden of Mrs. Harris's just complaint. Nor can she "go bankrupt" and start up again; for farm bankruptcy (unlike commercial bankruptcy) means loss of home and independence.

So she holds on, making one desperate shift after another—yes, even to writing articles for the *Saturday Evening Post*, and a book which tells her own story. The "human interest" of her story, from the Sunday feature point of view, is in the make-shifts that this courageous woman has thought up: the ways of swapping pears, tomatoes, candy, turkeys, and whatnot for shoe repairs, tuition, fences, and church assessments. Hence the title: *The Barter Lady*. But barter is only a make-shift, the result of the major problem and not a solution of it.

That problem has been set forth many times before this, in more generalized forms, but it is given point and force by this persuasive personal instance. Simply stated, it is: How, under modern conditions, can the farm keep its old status as a "way of life" and yet produce a cash income? Heads have wagged over the problem, and this is not the place to attempt any discussion of it, other than to point out one or two obvious facts. One of these is the extraordinary innocence of mind which permits Mrs. Harris to talk all around the centre of the problem without ever really getting at it, or even recognizing what the problem is. In that she is like a great many farmers who, though vaguely rebellious against commercial economics, cannot resist the lure of "business farming". And the other fact is that no solution can ever be achieved in terms of the industrial economics now being applied by the Tugwells and Ezekiels of the Roosevelt Administration. If Mrs. Harris wants to be a successful "business farmer", she will have to find some way (which she does not seem political-minded enough to visualize) of setting the price of pears in her own orchard rather than on a New York railroad siding. If she cannot do that, she will continue to be at the mercy of men like the Italian fruit-vender she questioned, who preferred to sell four pears for a quarter rather than eight for a quarter—a "distribution" that would "relieve the glut". His reply was: "Why I push two box if I make it on one?"

DONALD DAVIDSON

Two Travellers *

FEW writers give themselves away more completely than do the writers of travel books. A novelist may—like the late D. H. Lawrence, for example, or, to take a greater example, Tolstoi—include in his work all his

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* IN ALL COUNTRIES *by John Dos Passos* (HARCOURT, BRACE. 273 pp. $2.50).
BEYOND THE MEXIQUE BAY *by Aldous Huxley* (HARPER. 292 pp. $2.75).

own private hatreds and admirations, all his scheme of the universe as he thinks it ought to be, yet he is forbidden by the very terms of reference of his art, which depends on character-creation, from tipping the balance so completely against his characters, even those least like himself, as to make them unplausible. The poet, though he deals with what is possibly an altogether private world, has to write of it in terms of a general and public one. But the travel-book writer is free. He can display himself to the top of his bent against any background that may be of his choosing. He is free to say just what he thinks, to feel all that he feels. Like Montaigne (himself an extremely able travel-book writer) he can be *ondoyant et divers*, self-contradictory, sceptical, or credulous, and no one will stop him. No one will ask of him the disagreeable question, just what his book teaches, just what are its relations to religion, politics, capitalism, or the Five-Year Plan. The travel-book writer is possibly the last intellectually free specimen of writer left in the modern world.

Of the two travel-book writers with which this review is to deal, it is possible that Mr. Dos Passos is the better, because he gives us less directly the substance of his own views and opinions, and more of the background in which his views and opinions may be found. Mr. Dos Passos, as is well known, is a writer in strong sympathy with the lot of the underdog and with the revolutionary movements abroad in the world that aim at improving it. Mr. Huxley, on the other hand, is a disillusioned sceptic, attracted to Mexico for the reason that it was here that his friend

Lawrence found the best examples of those primitive life-beliefs which he employed to combat the mechanical abstractions of modern civilization. But though it might seem that, of the two, Mr. Huxley could give us the more judicious and unprejudiced picture, such is not the case. Mr. Dos Passos enlists our sympathy by simply giving us what he has seen without comment. Mr. Huxley is so busy unravelling his own confusions and qualifications of perception that he never seems for a moment, even, to have seen Mexico clearly.

The difference between these two writers might perhaps be sought in their upbringing. Mr. Dos Passos is the product of a powerful American university. Now the most conspicuous fact about the American universities in the past is the fact that they utterly and completely failed, from the Civil War on, to give to the country any other spiritual and intellectual direction than that of complete *laisser-faire*, which is neither honest conservatism nor honest radicalism, but which is the weakest and most sentimental kind of liberalism.

The small colleges were quite frequently less vicious in drifting along with this current than were the great universities, heavily endowed and prepared to use their endowments lavishly for nothing better than throwing up a sham façade of culture over a naked game of plutocratic grab. The very university which Mr. Dos Passos attended, completely capitulated shortly after he went there, and installed its own College of Business Administration. It is quite possible that the spirit of abstract pedantry in which Mr. Dos Passos's culture was given him (for of all the Communist writers, he is the most cultured), led him to revolt. He now tends to look on all the academic, all the traditional, all the accepted sides of literature and life as being dead. In following a new and revolutionary ferment across the world, he is following cultural adventure. Just as the Elizabethans sought for adventure in their lives, their writing, their attitudes to the world, so will he seek, in his day, something that opposes his own cut-and-dried upbringing. It is an engaging trait, and explains better than anything else the real qualities of his writing and of his mind.

Mr. Huxley stands at the opposite pole. It is not for nothing that he is the product of modern Oxford. To reveal enthusiasm, to manifest excitement, to be whole-hearted about anything, would seem to him to be either crass or a little vulgar. His is the head upon which all the ends of the world have come, and his eyelids are always a little, and mostly considerably, weary. He is incapable of writing like this, for instance:

> When my head was bursting with stuffiness and the smell of the charcoal and the maddening prismatic puzzle of the Russian language, I slipped out and walked away from the house over the hill. It was dark and the sleet had made a light crust on the snow. Overhead I could barely make out a low even lid of clouds. In a few steps the tiny string of lights of the village was lost in the snowy folds of the plain. The raw wind threw an occasional handful of sleet in my face. Everywhere the endless northern plain at the beginning of night, at the beginning of winter. No sense of locality; no ingrained quaintness of ancient local histories or customs. It might be Alberta or the

Dakotas or Tasmania or Patagonia, any untrampled unfenced section of the earth's surface where man, tortured by the teasing stings of hope, can strain every apprehension of the mind, every muscle of the body to lay the foundations of a new order. It's a tremendous thing to walk alone, even a short distance, at night at the beginning of winter over the Russian plains.

Instead, Mr. Huxley carefully informs us that the tropics are really depressing after all; he is interested not so much in the aesthetic qualities of Mayan sculpture and architecture, as in the Mayan preoccupation with time; he believes the Indians to be stupid because they like to beat drums, and have frequently lice on their bodies; and then somewhere about page 260 he engages in a long discussion about the comparative merits of primitive as opposed to civilized races. He disagrees with Mr. Stuart Chase (and in this he is quite right) for supposing, as Mr. Chase does, that the Mexicans could become a really great people if they would adopt modern sanitation methods, electric powerhouses, Ford cars, ice-boxes, and metalled roads, and keep as well their remarkable aesthetic sense, their communal spirit, their ability at handicrafts, their love for fiestas and local Saint's Days. He points out that the primitive must either accept modern industrial civilization altogether, or reject it *en bloc*; that it is rather for the sophisticated (such as himself) to build into their lives certain elements taken over from the primitive; he asks again the question—raised also in *Brave New World*—whether it would not be possible for civilized modern populations to keep a few primitive spots, like Indian reservations, functioning, by way of contrast; and finally he concludes, after looking at the Gulf of Mexico from the vantage point of his steamer chair:

> The Gulf of Mexico was flat and dark blue and finely wrinkled by a steady breeze. It was as though we were gliding over an endless expanse of blue morocco leather, over the sumptuous royal binding of some enormous folio. A book, I thought, as I leaned over the rail. And what is written within? *Quien Sabe?*
>
> *Thrice happy he, who, not mistook,*
> *Has read in Nature's mystic book!*
>
> But what about him who *is* mistook? And how is one to tell when a mistake has been made? The poet is silent. True, the writing in the book is progressively decipherable. It is a matter of industry and scientific intelligence. But what is the meaning of the deciphered words? One can only guess and having guessed, hope and believe and obstinately insist that the guess is right. In other words, one has an intuition (or else accepts somebody else's intuition) and one has faith in its correctness.

In other words, Mr. Huxley does not know what to make of his dip into primitivism. Unlike Mr. Dos Passos, who is content to take a setting that is without deep-rooted tradition, local custom, or history, but which is striving to build up an entirely new order, Mr. Huxley is unwilling to part with his precious sense of Oxford superiority to the vermin-infested Indians he has just seen, and whose "writing" he thinks–oh, Oxford Owl!–to be "progressively decipherable", thanks to "industry and scientific intelligence"–of which, presumably, he is the given and sacred depositary. He is determined to eat his cake of civilization and have his cake of primitivism as well, is Mr. Huxley. We leave him muttering after Spinoza: "Human Bondage is the price of Human Freedom", seemingly blithely unconscious that the Freedom Spinoza was there talking about was the Freedom of God, and therefore not—despite Spinoza's own definition—human.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

EDITORIAL NOTES

Almost a Distributist

I DO NOT remember ever experiencing a greater shock of both pleasure and astonishment than when reading the passage quoted below, from a recent book. The astonishment arose from the author's name–he was almost the last person in the world I should have expected to voice such sentiments. The reader is urged to postpone satisfying his curiosity until he has reached the end, and to place his hand over the name when he turns the page–such surprises are too rare not to be enjoyed to the full.

The pleasure arose not only from the author's eloquent, trenchant statement of some of the truths most necessary for the men of our day to realize, but from finding them expressed anywhere in this country outside the columns of THE AMERICAN REVIEW. It has been rather a solitary business, this year and a half, talking about liberty in terms of the only condition by which it can be attained: namely, the diffusion of active ownership in productive property until ownership is characteristic of society (instead of exceptional as in our state of increasing plutocracy and proletarianism), until it dominates its tone, its laws, its conduct. Liberty, to be sure, is on everyone's tongue —but it is identified with freedom of speech, quadrennial voting, idiosyncratic morals, and similar trivialities–when it is not identified with leisure and "the two-hour week". Property, too, has many a resound-ing speech made in its behalf; but only by those who wish to continue hogging the nation's heritage of wealth, with the fewest possible concessions to the demands of ordinary humanitarianism—and none at all to liberty. For the conception of property as the safeguard of liberty, upon which this nation was founded, has all but died out among us. You can read till blinded the endless stream of newspaper, magazine, and book discussions of economics and politics, and never see it mentioned—but only the ceaseless babble about "security" or "plenty" of the collectivists, avowed and concealed, who are driving us toward the Servile State, and who differ only in the question whether our masters shall seize power or simply gravitate into it.

It was an unwonted pleasure, then, to meet the following passage in a discussion of contemporary problems:

> It is by the reduction of the extremes and the fostering and the maintenance of a middle condition among its people that a modern state can make itself most solid and most serviceable. When a large class are insecure and a powerful class possess extraordinary private influence, the incentives to exploit the state for special purposes are too strong to be resisted by the public spirit of the disinterested and the neutrality of the uninterested. In the proletariat there is a reservoir of voters who, lacking a definite stake in the social order, are responsive to bribery and enchantment; in the plutocracy there are men of exceptional enterprise and audacity, who, as Aristotle said "have too much of the goods of fortune, strength, wealth, friends, and the like" and "are neither willing nor able to submit to authority". Therefore, to establish a

state, of which the government is representative, in a community which desires to preserve an economy run by private transactions but held in balance by collective action, it is necessary to take as an avowed object of policy the abolition both of the proletariat and of the plutocracy.

In making this avowal we must not let ourselves be distracted or confused by the cry that this is socialism, Marxism, the class war, and confiscation. It is none of these things. It is their very opposite. It is a policy which is frankly and unashamedly middle class in its ideal; it envisages a nation in which private property for private use and private security is firmly established because most men possess it; it is opposed to the condition of proletarianism as a denial of the security, the independence, and the liberty which sufficient property will provide; it is opposed to plutocracy because the inordinate accumulation of property means an inordinate accumulation of power. This is not a project to abolish private property and to make all the people servants of the state. On the contrary, it is a project to make the mass of the people independent of the state: that they may be free citizens, who need not be fed by the government, who have no impelling reason to exploit the government, who cannot be bribed, who cannot be coerced, who have no fear of the state and expect no favours. For their livelihood and personal security rest upon private property and vested rights, not upon the acts of officials.

It has been the fashion to speak of the conflict between human rights and property rights, and from this it has come to be widely believed that the cause of private property is tainted with evil and should not be espoused by rational and civilized men. In so far as these ideas refer to plutocratic property, to great impersonal corporate properties, they make sense. These are not in reality private properties. They are public properties privately controlled and they have either to be reduced to genuinely private properties or to be publicly controlled. But the issue between the giant corporation and the public should not be allowed to obscure the truth that the only dependable foundation of personal liberty is the personal economic security of private property.

The teaching of history is very certain on this point. It was in the mediaeval doctrine that to kings belong authority but to private persons, property, that the way was discovered to limit the authority of the king and to promote the liberties of the subject. Private property was the original source of freedom. It is still its main bulwark. . . . Men cannot be made free by laws unless they are in fact free because no man can buy and no man can coerce them. That is why the Englishman's belief that his home is his castle and that the king cannot enter into it, like the American's conviction that he must be able to look any man in the eye and tell him to go to hell, are the very essence of the free man's way of life.

This is the substance of liberty, not perhaps as dialecticians or doctrinaires might define it, but as the peoples who have won and maintained their liberties have learned to understand it. . . .

The author, if you please, is Walter Lippmann. Yes, Walter Lippmann; in the Godkin Lectures delivered at Harvard last May and now published as *The Method of Freedom.**

I must confess that my pleasure in reading this masterful presentation of the social views which The American Review was in large measure founded to propagate, was somewhat tempered by the recurring thought that there *must* be a catch somewhere. For after all, this was Walter Lippmann speaking. I wish it were possible to say that there was no catch, and to welcome Mr. Lippmann completely into the fold of Distributists. His powerful pen and the fine vantage point of his newspaper articles could perform immeasurable service to the ideal of liberty-through-property—the only way that the central American tradition can be preserved. But alas! the catch came in the very next paragraph. After one more sentence of unexceptionable good sense he proceeds to give the whole show away, in the words italicized:

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* THE METHOD OF FREEDOM *by Walter Lippmann* (MACMILLAN. 117 pp. $1.50).

> From this point of view the extinction of proletarian insecurity and the reduction of plutocratic power are means to an end: which is to fortify the régime of liberty upon a foundation of private property. And here again, I must say in a parenthesis that it is not necessary or possible to attempt too precise a definition of private property. *I mean by it substantial security of income necessary to existence. Whether that income is derived in whole or in part from land, stocks, bonds, wages, salaries, pensions, insurance, does not matter provided the individual is assured that in the normal course of events he can depend upon it.*

What a descent! What a let-down! From *property* and *liberty* to *income* and *security*! From farms and shops and home industries and small factories to stocks and bonds and wages and pensions! From the distributist state to—the planned economy!

It becomes apparent that Mr. Lippmann was not talking about liberty and property at all. The whole thing was a rhetorical accident; a momentary flight of a highly gifted and agile penman who remains the inveterate liberal—which is to say, the inveterate enemy of liberty. This was, in spite of everything, the same old Walter Lippmann. The Walter Lippmann who could, in *A Preface to Morals*, quote all the favourite passages of Babbitt and More from Buddha, Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Christ, bearing on the inner check, the principle of vital control, and accompany them with apparently fully comprehending comments—only to end with a bastardized Stoicism under the name of "high religion", and make a plea for "disinterestedness" on the part of our business men that amounted only to a sophistical defence of *laisser-faire*. This was the Walter Lippmann who could observe the events in Paris of last February 6th —the inevitable outgrowth of thirty years' work on the part of Charles Maurras and his brilliant assistants in rousing an increasing host of French citizens to a realization of the evils of their pseudo-democratic régime, a work that has played a vital and germinative part in the great anti-parliamentary movement that has given us Fascism—and could discuss the episode not only with no allusion to Maurras, but entirely in terms of fluctuating currencies and rising prices! Economic determinism gone mad, if the epithet were not redundant.

But in a chameleon-like way he was able to capture for a moment the mood of Distributism—though not for long enough to feel what it really means; to know the meaning of the liberty he so eloquently champions, to know what is this thing called ownership he so sturdily plants himself upon. This is not the occasion for a detailed examination of the fallacy into which Mr. Lippmann has fallen. The delusion about "security" is only one aspect of the general contemporary muddle in these matters which will be the subject of a longer piece, in an early issue, to be called "The Attack on Liberty", as previously announced. But perhaps a question or two, using an excellent test of liberty proposed by Mr. Lippmann, will suggest the point.

Whom does Mr. Lippmann think a man can tell to go to hell if he is dependent on wages? Anybody that really matters to him? More important, whom does Mr. Lippmann think a man can tell to go to hell who is dependent on the hope of "insurance against accident, disease, old age, and unemployment; pensions [when] incapacitated and handicapped"? The *essence* of these schemes for social insurance is that they strike not only at liberty but at every semblance of ordinary dignity. They oblige a man not only to forgo using strong language to a multitude of personages, but to preserve a faultless record of submissiveness and meek service to a string of officials added to whatever employers he may have. It is impossible to imagine a system of social insurance that does not involve a card for each man, filled out by employers and officials, recounting the man's behaviour as judged by employers and officials. That is not liberty. To men with any taste for liberty it is not sufferable.

It is true that a man who has a tidy collection of stocks or bonds paying dividends can say pretty much what he pleases to anybody. But one thing he cannot say: he cannot say that he *owns property* in any significant amount. . . . This covers all of Mr. Lippmann's kinds of "property" that are to secure liberty except the first one, *land*. On first meeting it I thought of course he meant a farm. But now I am sure he meant a piece of real estate.

The climactic proposal which Mr. Lippmann is working up to in his defence of liberty and property —this soon reduces to a plea for "recognizing the right to work as one of the rights of man"—is the following: "The essential principle is to have on hand at all times varied projects of useful public work on which any citizen may find employment when he needs it." . . .

Well, let us be grateful to Mr. Lippmann for lending his pen, if only for a moment, to the cause of liberty. And let us take renewed hope that the old American ideal may still find supporters from the fact that one so little able to understand it could come for a little while under its spell.

S. C.